

THE TIMES

35p

No. 66,077

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19 1997

http://www.the-times.co.uk

A MAN IS FOR CHRISTMAS

NOT FOR LIFE

Rachel Morris
PAGE 19

THE PANIC PARTY DRESS

PAGE 18

JONATHAN MEADES LANDS ON PLANET HOLLYWOOD

MAGAZINE

Chicken Shed v Teletubbies

Bosnia shoot-out at dawn

SAS raid nets war crimes suspects

FROM TOM WALKER IN STARI VITEZ AND TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

SAS TROOPS joined Dutch marines in pre-dawn raids in central Bosnia yesterday, arresting two Croats suspected of war crimes, one of whom was injured in a shoot-out in his bedroom.

The operation, which was planned over several months, belied Nato's claim that war criminals are only arrested during the course of normal duties for troops of the Bosnian Stabilisation Force.

SAS troops spearheaded the raids. The Dutch soldiers had been in Bosnia less than a week after undergoing special training in America.

Nato sources in Sarajevo said yesterday's arrests could be the prelude to an operation to seize "big fish" war crimes suspects still at large, the wartime Serb leaders Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic. Dr Karadzic is in the Serb stronghold of Pale and General Mladic is in Han Pijesak in eastern Bosnia.

There are about 5,000 British troops involved in the Nato-led peacekeeping operation. The Americans have about 8,400 soldiers in Bosnia and another 700 in Croatia. The Dutch have 1,000 in Bosnia.

The arrests caused turmoil in central Bosnia, where relations between Croats and Muslims have deteriorated sharply in recent months. In the ruined former Muslim-dominated village of Ahmici, an angry crowd of about 100 Croats surrounded the hillside villa of Vlatko Kupreskic, the 30-year-old suspect injured in the raid.

A mile away, on the road into the region's main Croat town, Vitez, another mob faced a Dutch military cordon. The house of the second suspect, Anto Furundzija, was inaccessible.

Mr Kupreskic's distraught wife, Ljubica, 35, speaking by telephone said troops had thrown grenades through the balcony window of their home at about 1am. The couple awoke in a haze of smoke and noise. She said all

she could remember was that shots were being pumped into her husband who writhed in agony on the floor.

"There's blood all over the place, come and look," she screamed. "My husband is no criminal, he plays guitar."

Major Peter Clarke, a Nato spokesman in Sarajevo, said Mr Kupreskic had opened fire with an automatic rifle on the troops in his bedroom and was shot in the shoulder, arm and leg.

Mr Furundzija apparently surrendered without a struggle, and was on his way to The Hague as news of the raids became known in Sarajevo. Mr Kupreskic was treated at a Dutch military hospital before he too was taken to The Hague.

Both men have been linked with the massacre of Muslims in Ahmici in April 1993, which claimed 103 lives, 33 of them women and children. Many of the victims were burned alive as Croats belonging to a notorious paramilitary band known as "The Jokers", razed the village. Mr Furundzija, was allegedly the leader of the band.

President Clinton announced yesterday that American troops would remain in Bosnia beyond the June deadline for Nato withdrawal, prompting immediate protests from Republicans on Capitol Hill. The decision, which had been anticipated for months, came days before a scheduled 12-hour visit by Mr Clinton to the US contingent in Bosnia.

Privately, the White House conceded that US forces would remain in the Balkans for several years. The President said he would set no further deadline for withdrawal. "The progress in Bosnia is unmistakable, but it is not yet irreversible," he said. "We have learnt the hard way in this century that Europe's stability and America's security are joined. If we pull out before the job is done, Bosnia will almost certainly fall back into a war every bit as violent as the last one."



Katalina Meyer, left, and her friend Zohra Lahrizi, for whom she went back into the flames. Both women died

Socialite dies rescuing friends

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

ONE of New York's richest women, Katalina Meyer, was being hailed yesterday as a true heroine after she died in her burning five-storey mansion while trying to save the life of an actress friend trapped by flames.

Mrs Meyer, 60, had already saved the lives of five other people, including her 52-year-old husband, Alvin. Her death has devastated New York socialites, for whom she was an unequalled hostess. Her parties included guests as varied as the writer Norman Mailer, the supermodel Christy Turlington, and the former Nicaraguan leader Daniel Ortega.

Mrs Meyer's art collection, said to be worth millions of pounds, was also consumed in the fire.

The blaze at the Upper East Side mansion — a neo-classical 19th century building listed as "notable" by the American Institute of Architects, and recently valued at \$15 million

(£9.3 million) was caused by a short circuit in Christmas lights draped over the facade. A spark set fire to the drapes in a third floor room at dawn on Wednesday.

Awakened by fumes from the fire, Mrs Meyer, who was in the master bedroom on the same floor, led her husband to safety down three flights of stairs. As the flames began to flicker up the stairwell, she awakened her three Guatemalan servants, urging them to save themselves.

After taking her husband outside, Mrs Meyer remembered that Zohra Lahrizi, a Moroccan actress and friend, was still on the top floor, with the daughter of a friend from Russia. Ignoring the pleas of Carlos Ramirez, her butler, she pushed her way indoors again, intent on saving her guests' lives.

An asthmatic, she struggled to the fifth floor just in time to help the Russian woman escape by a fire escape at the

back of the building. But by the time she reached Ms Lahrizi's room, they were caught in a fire trap. Firefighters arrived just as the women leapt to their deaths from a window, their hair and bodies aflame. Both were impaled on an iron fence below.

Thomas Van Essen, New York's Fire Commissioner, described Mrs Meyer as a "true heroine". He said she and Ms Lahrizi would have jumped from the window because "it had to be like an oven up there".

Yesterday, tributes poured in for Mrs Meyer, who also had the distinction of being one of the first women stock-brokers on Wall Street. The artist Larry Rivers, a particular friend, many of whose works were destroyed in the fire, said: "She was a social creature beyond belief, feeding 40 people every weekend. Her tables looked like Dutch still lifes — 8,000 things on the table. It was beautiful."



Firemen at the ruined New York mansion

Princess and Dodi spoke of marriage in 'last interview'

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

A FRENCH magazine yesterday published what it claims was the last interview given by Diana, Princess of Wales, and Dodi Fayed.

The Princess and Fayed are quoted at length in *Paris-Match*, speaking intimately about their relationship and the possibility of marriage and children. The magazine says that the interview was conducted in the Côte d'Azur, where the Princess and Fayed were on holiday last summer, just a few weeks before the car crash in which they died in Paris on August 31.

Paris-Match insists "there is no doubt about the authenticity" of its "exclusive" interview but, since the interviewer remains anonymous and the specific place and time of the meeting have not been given, the truth of the report remains questionable.

"My feelings for Dodi are deep and I believe in the sincerity of his own feelings... today I dream of sincerity and love," the Princess is quoted as saying. She also reportedly talked to the nameless interviewer about the "wreckage" of her marriage to the Prince of Wales.

Fayed is reported as saying: "I have never known such harmony. My dream... why not, in the end, make a marriage of love?" When asked about the possibility of having another child, the Princess is said to have laughed and replied: "Don't you think I'm too old? I imagine that to be a mother and a fulfilled woman at the same time, that must be real happiness."

The interview, headlined "Diana and Dodi — The Confession", is prefaced by Roger Théron, the managing editor of *Paris-Match*, who

claims that, the day after the crash, he was contacted by "a person that I know and admire". He quotes this person as telling him that the interview was to help the couple to answer the media's questions. *Paris-Match* does not say why it has allowed four months to elapse before publishing its "scoop", nor why the author has not been identified.

The tenor, content and language of the question-and-answer session is remarkably similar to an interview given by the Princess to Annick Cojean of the Parisian daily *Le Monde* and published five days before her death.

In both interviews the Princess is reported as saying that she had considered leaving Britain and living abroad because of media pressure, but had decided to stay to be near her two sons.

In the *Paris-Match* interview, she also speaks of the criticism she had endured, her desire to be "understood", her work among "the weak, the ill and the poor", her belief that she was closer to "modest people than high society" and the rigidity of the Royal Family.

"I did not know when I joined this family that being natural would seem so suspect to the permanent observers of one's acts and gestures," she is quoted as saying in *Paris-Match*. "Nothing is worse than to suffer betrayal in love when one is young, very naive and very in love."

□ Mohamed Al Fayed, the father of Dodi, is launching his own investigation into the crash that killed the couple and has hired a former police investigator to head it, according to reports in Paris yesterday. (AP)

TV & RADIO	46, 47
WEATHER	24
CROSSWORDS	24, 48
LETTERS	21
OBITUARIES	23
MATTHEW PARKES	20
ARTS	32-34
CHESS & BRIDGE	45
COURT & SOCIAL	22
SPORT	43-46, 48
FASHION	18
EDUCATION	38
LAW REPORT	39
MEDIA	40-42

Buying The Times overseas
Australia \$10.00, Belgium \$10.00, Canada \$10.00, Denmark \$10.00, France \$10.00, Germany \$10.00, Greece \$10.00, Hong Kong \$10.00, Italy \$10.00, Japan \$10.00, Korea \$10.00, Luxembourg \$10.00, Malaysia \$10.00, Mexico \$10.00, Netherlands \$10.00, New Zealand \$10.00, Norway \$10.00, Portugal \$10.00, Singapore \$10.00, South Africa \$10.00, Spain \$10.00, Sweden \$10.00, Switzerland \$10.00, Taiwan \$10.00, Thailand \$10.00, USA \$10.00, United Kingdom \$10.00, West Germany \$10.00, Yugoslavia \$10.00

Bank chief quits over tax evasion

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

THE chairman of the City merchant bank Dresdner Kleinwort Benson resigned yesterday after allegations of tax evasion.

Hansgeorg Hofmann, 54, and just nine months in the job, has been under pressure to step down after admitting that he was negotiating with the German tax authorities over millions of marks of undeclared taxes.

Under British law, Herr Hofmann could have faced an investigation by the Bank of England, which can remove banking directors if it does not regard as "fit and proper".

The German case is believed to centre on undeclared proceeds from stock investments held in Swiss banks, but Herr Hofmann, who had lived outside Germany for 25 years, is not subject to a criminal investigation. He will be replaced by Gerd Hausler, his deputy.

Elk test somersault delays launch of second new car

FROM DEBORAH COLLCUTT IN FRANKFURT

THE German car manufacturer Daimler Benz is to delay the launch of its new Smart model because of safety problems — only months after another model, the Mercedes A-Class, flipped over during trials.

The revolutionary two-seater Smart car, developed and built by Daimler in partnership with the Swiss watch manufacturers SMH — producers of Swatch — turned over during the same so-called "elk test" as the A-Class, forcing engineers to return the car to the factory to widen the body. Nicolas Hayek, SMH chairman, said the Smart car had "failed under very extreme conditions".

The trial was carried out after the A-Class flipped over in October in tests by Scandinavian journalists simulating the sudden, high speed, braking turns needed to avoid running into wild elk. Mercedes had already be-

gun delivery of the A-Class when the "elk test" was completed, but it has now delayed the model until February to add new safety features, which include lower, wider tyres and an electronic stabilising device.

Although the revamped A-Class has subsequently passed an elk test, Mercedes has lost thousands of customers who cancelled their orders, which



Smart: a wider body after failing 'elk test'

along with the damage to its reputation, could cost the company tens of millions.

Heads are also likely to roll over the latest embarrassment.

"After the problems with the A-Class, the technicians put the Smart car through every imaginable test," said Mr Hayek. "We want a perfect car and that is why it was better now to delay the start of deliveries." The delay is expected to hurt earnings by about £11 million. Despite this and a 96 pence drop in the Daimler share value on the Frankfurt DAX yesterday afternoon, the company is standing by its 1997 profit forecast for further growth.

The delayed launches of Daimler's two latest ventures will be measured more in terms of bad publicity than actual profits and this recent incident raises serious questions as to why such safety problems were not unearthed earlier.



Hindley fights on

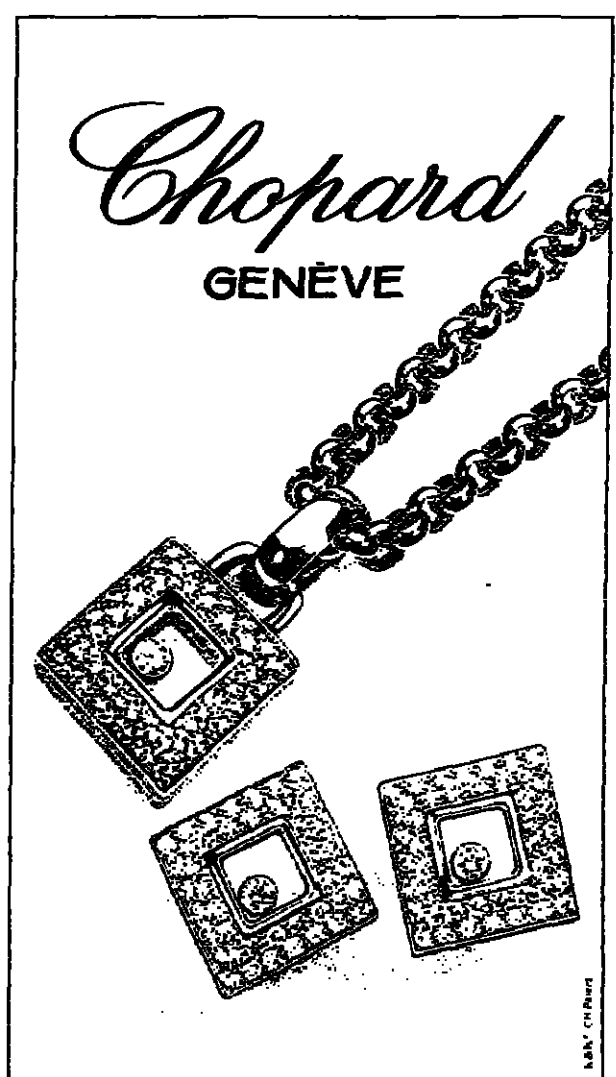
Myra Hindley, the Moors murderer, is to fight on for her freedom after she failed in her attempt to overturn the Home Secretary's decision that she must die in prison. She will now go to the Court of Appeal.

Page 7

Spinning trouble

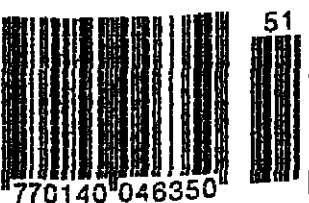
The Government's message of "greater transparency" in Europe risks backfiring, thanks to the heavy-handed tactics of its media managers when dealing with continental journalists.

Page 16



only by Chopard - HAPPY DIAMONDS® a unique concept becomes a classic

The fascination of mobile diamonds in an exclusive watch and jewellery line. Pendant and earrings in 18 ct yellow gold / diamonds. Available at leading jewellers worldwide. London: Chopard Boutique, 14 New Bond Street, Tel. 0171 409 31 40. For further information, catalogues and stockists, please call 0171 446 63 63



City comment, page 27

Rapping knuckles, not gifts, this season of goodwill

In this season of goodwill it is all but obligatory in the Commons Chamber to preface every question with the phrase "in this season of goodwill". The MP then goes on to insult whomever he or she is addressing.

But, if it fails to warm the politician's heart, the onset of Christmas does at least loosen the tongue. A frank aside at Questions to the President of the Board of Trade yesterday told us more about Margaret Beckett's attitude to Europe than seven months of bland, official press releases.

Her Tory Shadow, John Redwood, had complained

that Mrs Beckett used to be anti-Europe, but now toed the pro-European line. Dennis Skinner barked: "Yer did the opposite. Yer still a Johnny-come-lately." Brushing aside her briefing, Mrs Beckett smiled: "I met a man at dinner recently who told me he'd been a Eurosceptic since 1992. I replied, 'Too late!'"

The United Kingdom's economy was now "bound up", she added, with Europe. We "must make the best we can" of it.

So now we know. The President of the Board of Trade thinks the European Union is a bad thing from



MATTHEW PARRIS

POLITICAL SKETCH

which it is now too late to withdraw. A defensible point of view — but a slightly unexpected one from the person Mr Blair has put in charge of British trade, commerce and industry.

Dressed in an eye-catching white trouser-suit with white high-heels — which in this season of goodwill we might describe as equally suitable for a caravanning barbecue — Mrs Beckett was as cool as

ever. Not so her bizarre sidekick, Ian McCartney, who has misread his title. Minister for Competitiveness as Minister for Combativeness. Mr McCartney responds to every question with a hail of unintelligible gruff, belligerent squeaking noises, like a chubby, macho Glaswegian mouse.

Known to colleagues as Big Mac, he is shorter than Mrs Beckett and about half the

height of his lanky fellow-minister, John Battle. McCartney's head seems to sit straight on top of his ribcage with no intervening neck. The Opposition dubs him Teletubby but I have always found these creatures more thoughtful and articulate. In this season of goodwill we may call it unsurprising that he was deputed yesterday to answer questions on skills-shortages.

Answering on renewable energy, another minister — gaunt, bearded, distracted John Battle — bumbled about "offshore wind projects", (presumably a reference to the

Paymaster General) and "sites of special scientific interest" — presumably a reference to Mr McCartney.

Colin Pickhall (Lab, W Lancs), wondered whether "we should not rather, be looking at Danish models" — an idea that excited a good deal of interest on the Tory benches. Pickhall stammered "perhaps that, too".

In this season of goodwill, remarked Opposition spokeswoman Cheryl Gillan, in a festive pink vest, to young Nigel Griffiths, Consumer Affairs Minister and team-leader in Gordon Brown's Junior Squad, "the only wrapping

this minister will be getting for Christmas will be across his knuckles."

As I left, the House Leader, Ann Taylor, walked in, sporting the most brutal haircut imaginable. Mrs Taylor, a high-powered apparition, brings an imaginative approach to her conciliatory role as Business Manager in Chief and has taken to heckling Opposition. Spokesmen from her place on the Front Bench, it is worth remarking that once you have imagined Taylor applying electrodes to your gonads you will never see her in quite the same way again.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Driving licences to carry photos

Photographs will be included on driving licences from next summer, the Government announced last night. The scheme, ordered by the European Union, will be phased in and will not affect licence holders immediately.

New drivers will be issued with the photocards on passing their test but motorists driving now will change only when they need to update details. It will not be compulsory to carry them and the Department of Transport says they will not become identity cards.

United's gift

Manchester United yesterday gave £100,000 to help a school that provided two of its youth players to become a specialist sports college. Kirk Hinton, 16, and Daniel Higginbotham, 18, were educated at Ashton on Mersey School, Trafford, one of 33 new specialist colleges announced yesterday by the Government.

Vets attack ban

Veterinary surgeons described the Government's decision to ban beef on the bone as a "panic overreaction" to a risk so small as to be almost non-existent. The British Veterinary Association said the Tory policy of complacency was in danger of being replaced by one of ill-considered, knee-jerk responses by Labour.

Rail fares up

Passengers on Connex South Central between London and East and West Croydon stations face a 10 per cent rise in fares. Those on Connex South Eastern will go up by an average of 5.3 per cent, while fares on Connex South Central's south London and Sussex Coast routes will rise by an average of 4.5 per cent.

Training deal

Richard Branson's Virgin Trains group yesterday announced a partnership between the private sector and a trade union to avert a huge potential shortage of drivers. An agreement between Virgin Trains and Aslef, the train drivers' union, will set up the first purpose-built training centre since privatisation of the railways.

Carling wins

Will Carling, the former England rugby union captain, was awarded undisclosed damages and costs against the *Daily Mail* yesterday, which had falsely accused him of being a stalker and a "telephone pest". A statement read out in Nottingham Crown Court said the newspaper wished to apologise to Mr Carling.

Censor chief

Andreas Whitam Smith, founding editor of *The Independent*, was yesterday appointed chairman of the British Board of Film Classification. He committed himself to a reform of the beleaguered institution, which has been widely criticised for its lax attitude to violence and sex and its secrecy over rulings.

Thomas bailed

Mickey Thomas, the former Manchester United and Welsh international soccer player, was charged yesterday with having unlawful sex with an underage girl, Thomas, 43, of Mochdre, near Colwyn Bay, north Wales, was arrested on Monday and bailed to appear before magistrates in Abergelle on January 22.

CORRECTIONS

□ A report (June 20) of an inquiry into the case of Peter Winship, a paranoid schizophrenic found guilty of the manslaughter of his father, should not have suggested physical abuse by him. No such abuse was ever established, and Mr Winship often confused his father with another adult figure in his life. □ The Government's ban on the sale of beef on the bone (report, December 4) will not affect Bovril.

Smith accused of U-turn on £1m for British Museum

By DALYA ALBERGE AND PHILIP WEBSTER

CHRIS SMITH was accused last night of a climbdown after promising the cash-strapped British Museum another £1 million on condition that it did not introduce admission charges next year.

In a carrot-and-stick offer, the Culture Secretary told the museum that the money was dependent upon it devising an action plan to cut costs dramatically, streamlining its cumbersome "bureaucracy" and generating more income to supplement its public subsidy.

His proposal was immediately attacked by Francis Maude, the Shadow Culture Secretary: "Last year Labour said they were in favour of admission charges, but would not fund them. Last month they claimed they had no influence over whether trustees choose to introduce admission charges."

"Now the Government says

that it is to provide an extra £1 million to the British Museum on the condition that it does not introduce admission charges." He said Mr Smith was "blundering from one U-turn to the next".

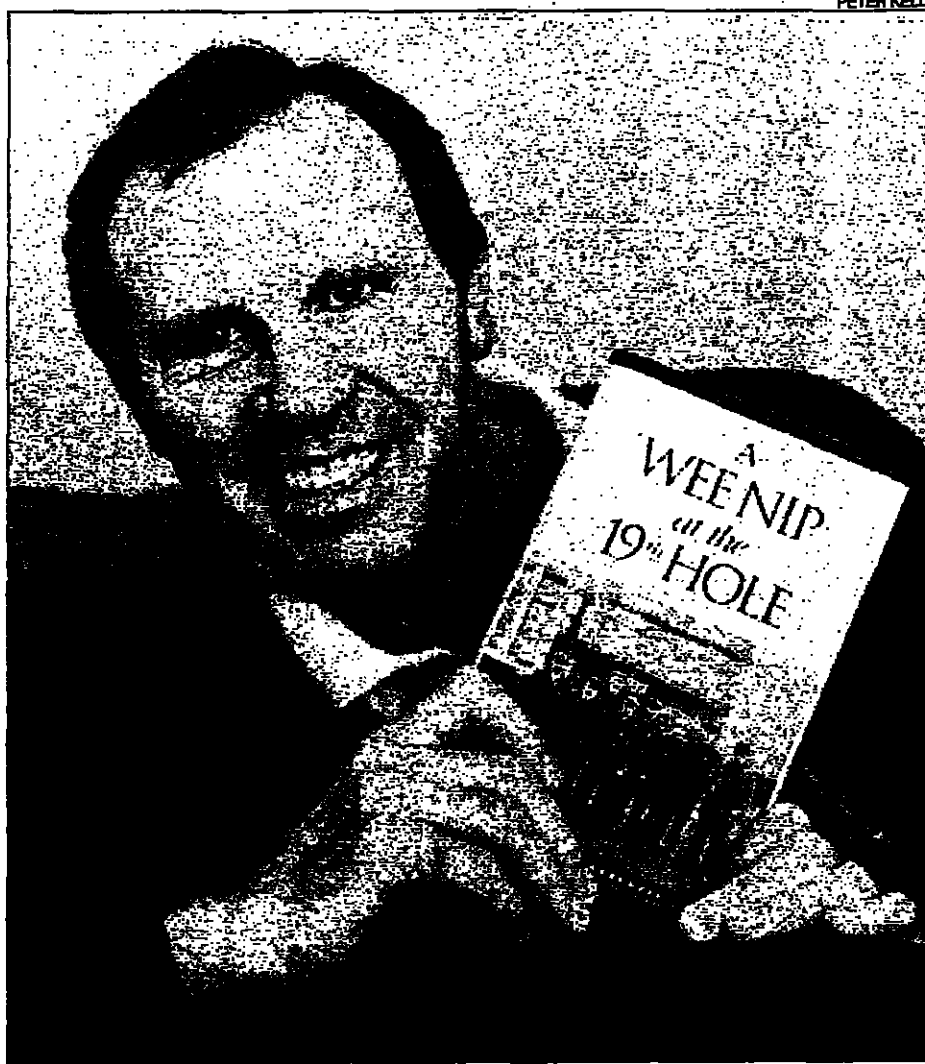
Sources close to Mr Smith said that he had made his surprise move to stop the museum taking "irrevocable" decisions on charging. In effect, Mr Smith was using delaying tactics, avoiding any rash decisions, at least until the publication of the Government's museums review next year.

Sir Hugh Leggett, the former Museums and Galleries Commissioner, welcomed the proposal. Acknowledging that £1 million would not go far, he said: "It's a start. As soon as one has made a start, one can move forward. It would be awful if he had slammed the door in the BM's faces, but he hasn't." He felt that Mr

Smith's "tough-talking" was just what museums needed.

The art world expressed anger that more money for the British Museum meant less for others. Three of the nation's most prominent institutions came in for particular punishment. The National Heritage Memorial Fund complained that they had suffered a drastic loss of £3 million while English Heritage was £2 million poorer. The British Film Institute said it had been badly hit by a £1 million decrease.

□ The Arts Council is facing its "worst revenue crisis" of recent decades, the council's outgoing chairman, the Earl of Gowrie, warned last night. He told peers that while the Arts Council had enjoyed "a capital feast" from National Lottery funds, it had, at the same time, suffered "a revenue famine" as its grant-in-aid was cut.



Richard Mackenzie's with the book that is proving such a success in America

Caddy bags a literary success

By PHILIP DELVES BROUGHTON

THE reminiscences of a Scottish golf caddy have overtaken Oprah Winfrey's latest book in the American best-seller charts. Richard Mackenzie, caddy master at St Andrews, had never written a book before he decided to collect stories from the club's caddies past and present. *A Weenip at the 19th Hole* has sold 40,000 copies.

Mr Mackenzie, 50, has just returned from a two-week trip to America to publicise his work, which will be released in Britain in the new year. He believes the success of a book that deals with characters such as Poot Chisholm and Tip Anderson, Arnold Palmer's caddy for many years, is because it goes back to the roots of golf. It also includes previously unpublished photographs.

Mr Mackenzie said: "It's about real characters and covers all aspects of the lives of caddies in St Andrews. But I never thought it would take off like this."

Aitken finds comfort in evangelical church

By PHILIP DELVES BROUGHTON

JONATHAN AITKEN has used his first public utterance since the collapse of his libel action against *The Guardian* to reveal himself as an evangelical Christian.

In a man not previously known for his saintliness, the conversion is Damascus, even more startling than Michael Portillo's sudden need to be loved.

The former Conservative Cabinet minister attributes his salvation to Holy Trinity Brompton, the London church at the heart of the Church of England's powerful evangelical movement, which includes the topless model Samantha Fox in its congregation.

In the Christmas issue of *The Spectator* magazine, Mr Aitken, who was once a churchwarden at St Margaret's, in Westminster, writes of his sympathy with the more grisly moments of the Nativity story.

As a young boy in hospital in Dublin for a serious tubercular condition, he says: "I was captivated by the cheerful Christmas symbols of heavenly hosts, angels, shepherds, wise men and stars in the East."

"But I later discovered a deeper message from the moments of pain and anxiety in the early stages of the Nativity saga and, more im-

portantly, from the way in which they were healed."

His recent plight was eased by the realisation that it was nothing when compared to the tough deal handed out to the newborn by Herod, or Joseph and Mary's night in the Bethlehem cowshed.

His language has lost nothing since he spoke of "the trusty sword of truth". He says the terms "spiritual hunger" and "greater spiritual awareness" were "sprinkled across the media like confetti", becoming "a cornucopia of clichés" at the time of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Evangelical Christianity, its prayer calls, fellowships and

teaching courses have provided the victuals for his own spiritual hunger.

He has joined the half a million or so who have taken the Holy Trinity Brompton Alpha course in Christianity. "Evidently," he writes, "I am not the only prisoner of past mistakes to have found this course helpful."

Mr Aitken is not, however, unaware that some might find his new-found faith surprising: "Belonging as I do to the Church of England, I am suspicious of foxhole conversions through 'easy believism', and cautious about accepting adversity as the gateway to a deeper faith."

His self-justification comes in the line from the Psalms about using one's vale of misery as a well, because the reward for the redeemed and penitent is love, joy and all sorts of other good things.

Mr Aitken's piece rises in a crescendo of alleluias to a final clarion call: "So long as faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ is one's companion in life's dark valleys, then even a painful Christmas can still be a joyful Christmas."

Mr Aitken yesterday declined to add anything more to what he had written.

Aitken took a course at Holy Trinity Brompton

Major riled by Hague's apology for ERM entry

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

JOHN MAJOR delivered a sideswipe at William Hague yesterday over the Tory leader's apology for Britain's entry to the European exchange-rate mechanism when Mr Major was Chancellor in 1990.

He also openly disagreed with Mr Hague's decision to rule out the single currency for ten years.

Mr Hague was hailed by the Tory Right after saying sorry over the ERM at the Tory conference in October. But Mr Major, who has tried to refrain from any criticism of his successor, allowed his irritation to show in an interview with *The Spectator*.

After hitting out at the "wilder extravagances" of some Tories over Europe the former Prime Minister said

he was glad he had never said sorry about the ERM. Politicians apologising was silly.

He mocked Tony Blair for making apologies, asking whether Uriah Heep was running the country. "Look at Blair, apologising to the Irish — next time he will probably apologise to the Italians," he said.

Asked if he thought Mr Hague was sensible to rule out a single currency for ten years, he replied: "I would not have ruled it out for ten years for the foreseeable future, perhaps, but not necessarily ten years."

Mr Major said he believed that the country, while lukewarm about Europe, was not fanatically anti. "Some of the wilder extravagances of members of my party were

for the birds. There were some people who made the whole Tory party seem mad."

He also uttered his fiercest attack since the election on the Government. "Labour lied to the middle classes. They made them all these promises of help and now, every day, they kick them in the pants. Gordon Brown's wholly unnecessary Budget was a disgraceful raid on pension funds. A higher rate of council tax and the abolition of Tessa's is stupid and incredibly vindictive..."

"I have calculated that Labour is costing each middle-class family £700 a month. I suppose they think they are being macho. I suppose that is why they refuse to bow to parliamentary opinion."

Christmas Entertainment

THE BEST PC GAMES OF THE YEAR

QUAKE II JUST ARRIVED

QUAKE II

"The best game ever has arrived"

PC GAMER CHRISTMAS 1997

The most exciting shoot-'em-up ever created is back with this fantastic sequel — includes new monsters whose IQs are the size of their appetite for fresh blood. The graphics, style, innovation and speed will blow you away

£29.99 96% PC GAMER

TOMB RAIDER II

starring Lara Croft

She's tall, sexy and hard as nails and she's back. Lara Croft, the star of last year's incredible Tomb Raider, returns in Tomb Raider II, the most talked about game of the year

£29.99 94% PC ZONE

OUR PRICES CANNOT BE BEATEN

The Comet Price Promise guarantees that if you buy any product from us, then within 14 days find the same offer on sale locally at a lower price, we'll willingly refund the difference, PLUS 10% OF THAT DIFFERENCE. Ask in store for full details.

OPEN LATE UNTIL 9PM

For your convenience most Comet stores are now open until 9pm weekdays, 6pm Saturdays and 5pm Sundays.

COMET

For local store details phone free on 0500 425 425. Visit our web site on: www.comet.co.uk

THE COMET PRICE: The stores in South Wales do not show savings in store. All items subject to availability. Ask in store for full details. Prices and information correct at time of going to press 18.12.97.

90% RATING PC ZONE MAGAZINE

CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 2 97/98

Take control of your favourite club in the greatest management game ever. All the latest transfers, up-to-date players and club statistics

£19.99 NEW

GAME OF THE MONTH PC GAMER DEC 97

BLADE RUNNER

Immerse yourself in the dark, gritty world of Los Angeles 2019, where you become both the hunter and the hunted. Stunning visuals with groundbreaking real-time story structures

£34.99 94% PC GAMER

97% RATING ULTIMATE PC MAGAZINE

FIFA 98: ROAD TO THE WORLD CUP

Attempt to qualify for the most famous football tournament in the world. Choose a country and a squad, then get ready to kick-off. There are motion-captured players, special moves and commentary from Andy Gray, John Motson and Des Lynam

£29.99 NEW

GAME OF DISTINCTION PC GAMER DEC 97

WORKS 2

Those cute felines are back. More chaos, more destruction and more hysterical late nights

£29.99 90% PC GAMER

COMET

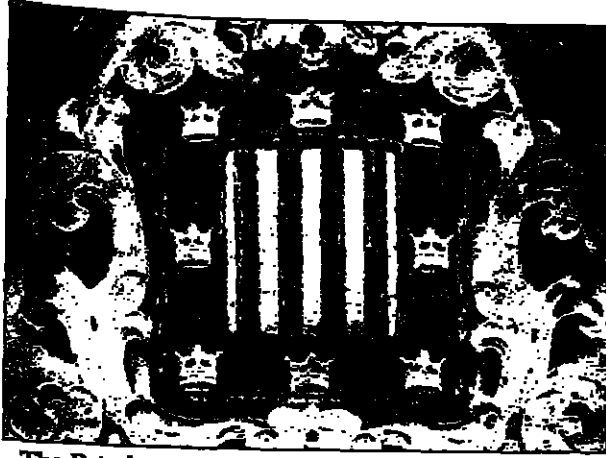
Make someone happy this Christmas

COMET

Make someone happy this Christmas

سكان النهر

College spooked by ghost of bursar past



The Peterhouse crest, above, and the college, below



Peterhouse considers exorcism of restless suicide victim who stalks the fellows' dining room, report

Adrian Lee and John O'Leary

CAMBRIDGE University's oldest college has turned to the Church for help in ridding itself of the restless spirit of a former bursar who took his life more than two centuries ago.

The tortured soul of Francis Dawes, who hanged himself from a bellrope at Peterhouse in 1789, is believed to be responsible for several ghostly sightings this year in the college's oak-panelled Combination Room.

Two butlers, Matthew Speller and Paul Davies, said they watched the ghost move slowly across the room before disappearing near the staircase where Dawes's body is thought to have been discovered. In the most recent incident, Andrew Murison, the current senior bursar, heard a repetitive knocking late at night and was enveloped by an eerie chill, although a large fire in the room was still glowing.

The Rev Dr Graham Ward, a

theologian and Dean of Peterhouse, has reported the haunting to the diocese of Ely and a requiem Mass may now be held to exorcise the spirit if it continues to disrupt college life. "It would be difficult because all the fellows and domestic staff would have to attend and, inevitably, some would not want to, but it might come to that," he said.

"Ghosts don't fit into any theology of the resurrection I know about, but I saw the absolute terror on the faces of those two [butlers], so I don't doubt that something happened. In a college full of unreliable people, they are completely reliable."

Dr Murison said: "There is no reason to disbelieve the butlers. They are very level-headed, although some of the fellows no doubt think they have been at the Master's port. As far as I am concerned, I did feel a sense of foreboding, but the ghost has not done any harm. I

think it is unlikely we would get all 45 fellows together for an exorcism — they are a cynical lot."

Dr Murison had stopped off in the Combination Room, where the fellows of the college hold meetings and eat lunch, when he felt the presence of his predecessor. "It was about 11.45 and, because I had missed supper, I went to get some fruit to take back to my room. I was about to pick up a banana when there was a knocking."

"I thought it must be the central heating coming on, but the sound came from beneath the window where there are no pipes or radiator. I had already noticed how cold it was, which I thought was strange because the embers in the fire were still red."

Dawes, who is buried in the neighbouring churchyard of Little St Mary's, committed suicide after blaming himself for the controversial election of Francis Barnes as

Master of Peterhouse. The election, overseen by the bursar, was marked by skulduggery and resulted in a highly unpopular victor. Historical documents note that hundreds of people attended the funeral of Dawes, a respected classicist, who was in his 60s when he died and bequeathed £100 to his beloved college.

The story of the Peterhouse haunting is told in today's edition of *The Times Higher Education Supplement*. So far, there is no sign of any malevolent intention by the ghost, which has become the talk of the college.

The butlers were adamant yesterday that there had been a visitation. The first sighting, in April, happened while both were serving dinner.

Mr Speller, 22, said: "We went into the Combination Room to get some plates before taking them up the spiral staircase. We were chat-

ting away when we both saw something move slowly across the room, about 15ft from the middle to the window. I just looked at Paul and said, 'Did you see that?'"

Both men described the ghost as human-sized, but said it was impossible to distinguish features or determine its sex as it travelled about 1ft off the ground. In the dimly lit room, it stood out brightly and, like the bursar, the butlers both said they felt a sudden chill. Mr Davies said: "I was not frightened but, at the same time, I did not want to get too close."

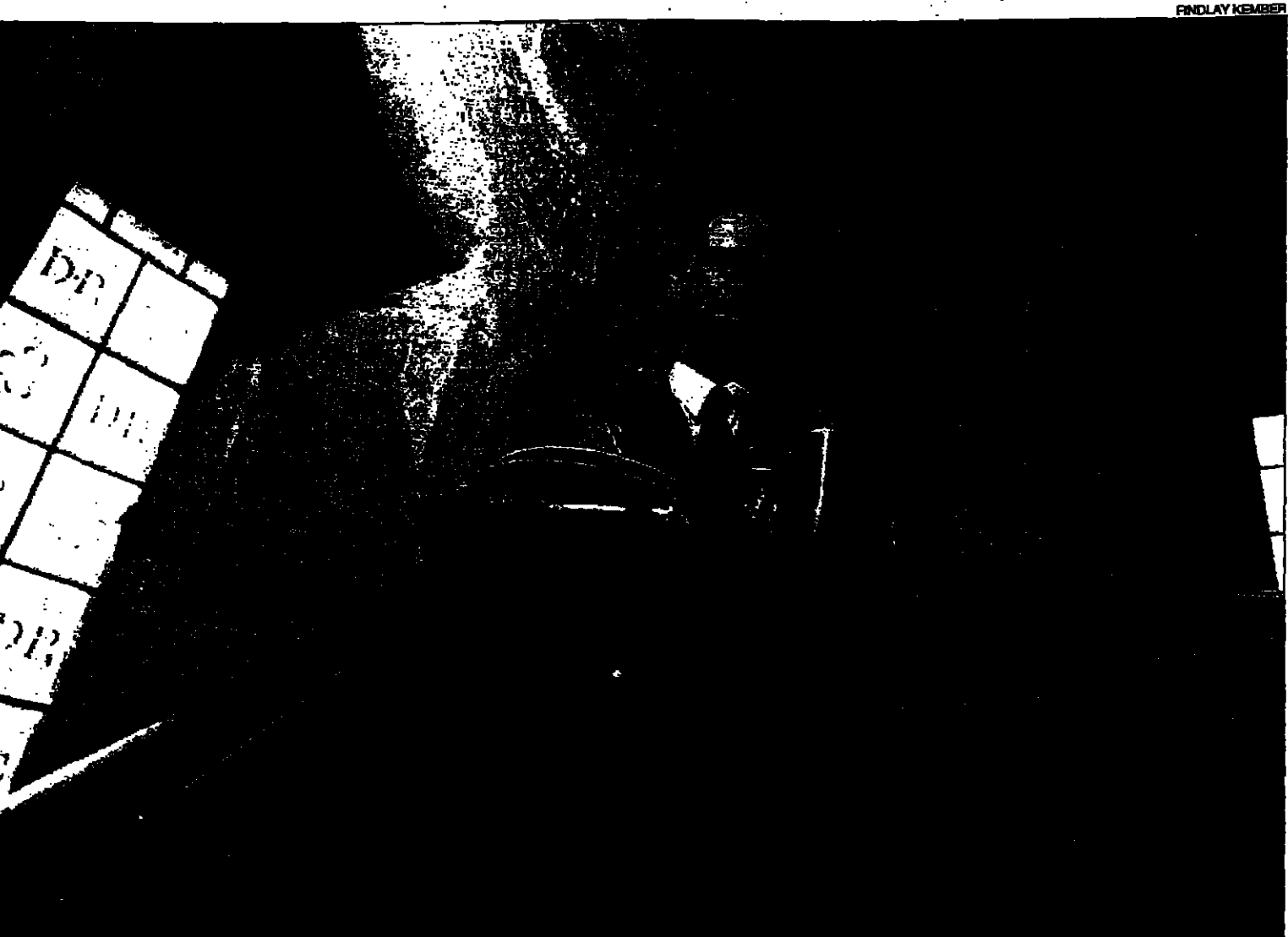
On another occasion they felt sufficiently alarmed to interrupt a dinner to inform the Dean. Mr Davies, 26, attempted to walk towards the apparition, but it did not waver, taking the same path to the window.

The stone staircase winds 40 steps and two floors to the belfry where the unfortunate bursar and

ed his life. The butlers have also heard rhythmic knocking which appeared to move around the panelling and, on another occasion, Paul Cooke, the senior butler, noticed a solid wooden door shaking violently. His strenuous efforts to hold it shut made no difference and, when the vibrations stopped and he was able to open it, there was no one on the other side.

Peterhouse is the ideal setting for a ghost story. Founded in 1284, it still occupies some of the original buildings. Dinners and meetings of the governing body are conducted by candlelight.

Two previous exorcisms have been carried out in the college. In the 18th century, a poltergeist was removed from a student's room and, more recently, a former Dean carried out a ceremony because of the appearance of a dark presence in a corner of the old courtyard overlooking a graveyard.



Matthew Speller, a college butler, outside the Combination Room, where he says he and a colleague saw the ghost and felt a sudden chill

Tests for cancer on Duchess of York negative

By JOANNA BAILE

THE Duchess of York was given a clean bill of health yesterday after tests, including cancer checks, on a lump under her arm.

A spokeswoman from her office said: "She is very relieved. This was a cautionary sign that she needs to slow down and rest because she is very tired."

A senior consultant at the Lister Hospital in central London is believed to have conducted a biopsy on the lump, which involves taking a sample of tissue to check whether it is a benign or malignant growth.

The Duchess, 38, was said to have discovered the lump and called her GP to her Berkshire home on Sunday. The GP referred the Duchess, who complained of feeling run-down, to the Lister, a renowned cancer hospital, which she attended for an hour on Tuesday night.

She has recently completed a busy schedule of charity events, including a Christmas concert for Children in Crisis at the London Docklands Arena and a visit to Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children. She has had an estimated 80 engagements in the past year and has travelled to America and back three times in the past month.

On Monday, despite her health concerns, the Duchess felt she could not pull out of a full day's filming and a photocall for a WeightWatchers advertising campaign. Her friends have expressed fears that the pressures over her personal finances and her role in the Royal Family may have contributed to her condition.

Last night the Duchess was said to be celebrating the news of her health check while on holiday at the Tuscan villa of her friend Count Gallo della Gherardesca, an Italian millionaire who is separated from his wife.

Dr Lesley Walker, of the Cancer Research Campaign, said: "Nine out of ten lumps are benign. But if they are malignant then it is important to get treatment as soon as possible."

Man acquitted of murder scared PC who bugged him

By TIM JONES

AN ODD-JOB man cleared of murdering Vikki Thompson, who was bludgeoned to death as she walked her dog, subjected the family of a policeman who investigated him to a series of death-threat telephone calls, a court was told yesterday.

Mark Weston, 22, learnt during his trial last December that the home he shared with his parents had been bugged by police while he was under suspicion. The family's conversations were relayed to the house of Weston's neighbour, PC Robert Salmon, the village constable of Ascot-under-Wychwood, Oxfordshire.

Weston spent ten months in custody before being acquitted by a jury. Paul Harrison, for the prosecution, told Wincing Magistrates' Court yesterday that after Weston was released he had made more than 50 calls to PC Salmon, his wife Sheila, and their daughters Caroline, 22, and Natalie, 19, between June and September this year.

Most of the calls, Mr Harrison said, were silent, but some were much more sinister. He had whispered: "Die, die," and "Soon you die". Mr Harri-



Mark Weston, who still felt persecuted by the police despite being cleared of murdering Vikki Thompson



son said Mrs Salmon was so distressed she was given anti-depressant pills by her doctor. Weston, who pleaded guilty to four charges of harassment, was caught after police mounted a surveillance operation using video equipment outside one of the telephone kiosks in the village.

After being arrested, Weston told police: "There he was, sitting in his house listening to everything being said so I decided to harass him by listening to his house."

Chris Edwards, for the de-

fence, said everything had stemmed from the dreadful murder of Mrs Thompson, which had still not been resolved. He said the charge against Weston had been dismissed in minutes because after a three-week trial the jury had decided the case against him was very weak.

Mr Edwards said: "The aftermath of the case has made victims of many people and one of them is Weston himself. He is blighted as far as job applications are concerned. Everywhere he goes

people are staring at him and the media interest will not go away."

He added: "My client says every time he goes into his garden so does PC Salmon. He feels very much under scrutiny, which he should not be because of his acquittal."

Weston, he said, believed he was being harassed by PC Salmon and had complained to police authorities about his behaviour. Mr Edwards added: "He was immature and wrong to try to get his own back by making calls to the Salmon household. But he denies the number of calls and says he did not make any threats of any kind."

Weston, he said, had decided of his own volition to stop making the calls before his arrest, after deciding they were getting him nowhere.

Weston, who is unemployed, was sentenced to a restraining order preventing him from having any contact with the Salmon family other than necessary contact with PC Salmon in his duty as a public officer.

After the hearing Weston said: "I'm glad [PC Salmon] felt scared the same way I did when I was arrested for a murder I didn't commit."

Who put the wind up Branson?

Andrew Pierce on a flight of fancy that has tickled the Virgin chief

RICHARD BRANSON'S long-standing rival, British Airways, may inadvertently have played a part in the premature departure of the Virgin Global Challenger balloon.

Technicians working on the multi-million-pound project have been at a loss to explain the freak gust of wind which propelled the world's biggest balloon 60,000 ft into the skies while the pilots were still on the ground.

As work began yesterday on a replacement envelope, it emerged that a BA 737 had landed at Marrakesh airport at almost the precise moment the 223 ft balloon broke free from its moorings on an adjoining field.

Turbulence from aircraft can disturb even larger planes flying into the wake. Weather charts have confirmed

that the winds gusted at a maximum speed of up to four knots as predicted throughout the day. But when disaster struck, with the BA jet in the vicinity, they soared to 14.

The half-full flight, number BA 6912, left from Gatwick Airport on schedule and landed at Marrakesh Airport 15 minutes early, at 11 am.

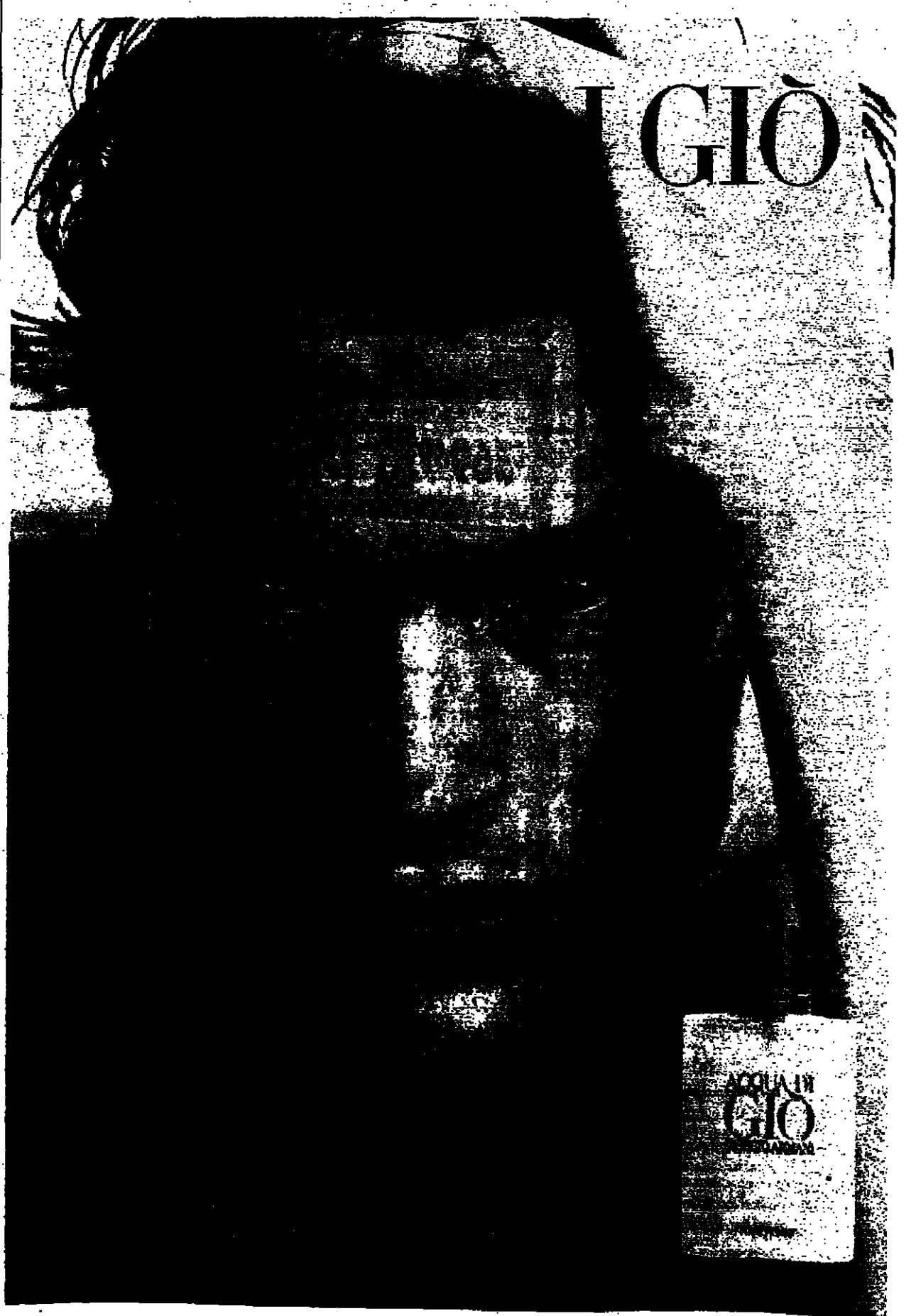
The balloon left on its unmanned flight at 11.02 am.

Michael Pegg, a holidaymaker from Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, who was on board, said: "When we were coming down I could see the balloon was inflated. We all looked out of the windows to try to get a better view. We then lost sight of it. Three or four minutes later, when we made it on to the runway, it had broken free.

When we stood on the steps to the ground it was well up into the sky and disappearing fast."

Mr Branson, who began a holiday yesterday before returning to try to relaunch his mission in a new balloon, reacted with good humour to the idea that BA, his old adversary in the so-called "dirty tricks" war, could have been a factor. He said: "I always thought that BA would sponsor me to stay up in a balloon for months and months on end. The last thing they would have wanted to do was ground me."

However, BA did not see the suggestion in the same humorous light. "I cannot believe our plane was anything to do with it," said a spokesman.



Portrait of the artist as a very sick man

By IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

REMBRANDT had a high cholesterol level and was probably suffering from a headache when he painted his famous self-portrait in 1659.

The artist, who was then 53, was showing signs of premature ageing, a condition he may well have inherited from his mother, according to a diagnosis made from a study of the picture by Carlos Espinel, a professor of cardiology and an amateur art historian.

He comes to the conclusion that when Rembrandt painted the picture, he was not only emotionally traumatised by financial and personal losses, but he was becoming affected by ageing and disease.

The accuracy of the way the skin is painted, with the grey swathe of the temporal blood vessel and the wrinkled brow, indicate that he was in pain. The likely explanation is a headache caused by temporal arteritis, an inflammation of the artery wall across the side of his forehead. This affects the scalp over the temples and causes pain and tenderness. The eyes, too, are showing signs of his ageing process.

The thick forehead wrinkles suggest he has chronic contraction of the surrounding muscles, which would give him brow ptosis. This can be caused by a neurological disease, such as a brain tumour or a cerebral aneurysm. The left eye is surrounded with cream-coloured lines that are a sign of xanthelasma, a tell-tale indication of a high cholesterol count. The white of the eye is also showing the coloured spots of pinguicula, a sign of ageing which is found today only in people who are at least 80.

From the redness of the cheeks and nose, he was suffering from rosacea, an inflammatory skin disease, as well as rhinophyma, a condition of elderly men where the nose becomes bulbous. Rosacea is most common in middle-aged, fair-skinned patients, causing redness and an effect like broken veins. It can be caused by overlong exposure to sunlight or by drinking.

Alcohol worsens rosacea, but at the time of the painting Rembrandt was supposedly living a simple ascetic life, having lost his wife, three of his five children, his



Rembrandt's self-portrait tells a story of "disease, depression and premature ageing"

wealth, his art collection and his grand house in Amsterdam. He had been declared insolvent three years earlier and his painting of Moses and the Tablets had just been rejected.

In the circumstances, Professor Espinel writes in the *Lancet*, he may well have been suffering from clinical depression. In a rented, dilapidated house he sat down to paint his own portrait.

"Stroke by stroke, wrinkle by wrinkle he managed to portray himself. He rendered his skin so that it spoke for him. And the skin in its frank, articulate and unforgetting language told of his struggle with time."

The artist survived for ten more years.

Press code will protect public from intrusion

By CAROL MIDDLEY, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

A REVISED code of practice designed to give the public greater protection from intrusion by newspapers and magazines was described yesterday as "the toughest in Europe" by Lord Wakeham, chairman of the Press Complaints Commission.

The revised regulations, influenced by the circumstances surrounding the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, in effect forbid harassment of the type practised by some paparazzi photographers. It specifically prohibits persistent pursuit by journalists and re-emphasises the responsibility of editors to ensure that material provided from outside sources is obtained in accordance with the provisions of the code.

The text begins: "All members of the press have a duty to maintain the highest professional and ethical standards. This code sets the benchmarks for those standards. It both protects the rights of the individual and upholds the public's right to know."

Changes relate to privacy, harassment, intrusion into grief, the treatment of children

and the public interest. Children at school, it says, have the right to be free from unnecessary intrusion. It bans payments to minors and provides protection for the children of the famous.

The code, which comes into effect on January 1, acknowledges that everyone is entitled to respect with regards to their private and family life, home, health and correspondence. It provides a new definition of a private place as "public or private property where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy".

In a section on grief, the code calls for sensitivity in publication in addition to the existing provisions relating to approaches by journalists. Exceptions for cases involving public interest have been reworded. The code says the public interest includes detecting or exposing crime or a serious misdemeanour, protecting public health and safety and preventing the public from being misled.

In cases involving children, editors must demonstrate an exceptional public interest to override the normally para-

mount interests of the child. Lord Wakeham welcomed the revised code. "I am pleased that the industry has responded so positively to the recommendations which I put forward in September," he said.

"As I said at that time, the new code will be the toughest set of industry regulations anywhere in Europe."

"I shall be continuing my efforts to seek equivalent provisions in other European countries to deal with the issue of harassment and also my discussions with the regulatory authorities for the broadcast media on the issue of the media scrum."

Sir David English, chairman of the industry's code committee, said: "I believe that the important changes which we have made in the code show that press self-regulation can and does respond speedily to public concern. I am confident that editors and journalists throughout the UK will demonstrate their responsibility in observing the new provisions."

Media, pages 40-42

SAVE UP TO £100 ON COMBIS & PORTABLES

SONY 14" FASTEXT TV VIDEO COMBI
14" screen
Long play
Programme delivery control
SCART socket
Model 14115
£379.99 NEW

TOSHIBA 14" FASTEXT TV
14" screen
On-screen display
SCART socket
Model 14078
In-store £379.99

Goodmans 14" TV VIDEO COMBI
14" screen
Long play SCART socket
Model 14115
Previously £349.99 In-store £279.99

SAVE UP TO £100 ON TELEVISIONS

SAVE UP TO £100 ON TELEVISIONS

Panasonic 21" NICAM STEREO TV
21" screen
What Video & TV Magazine - BEST BUY
Fastext
Auto set-up
SCART sockets
Model T21M303
was £499.99
Previously £349.99 In-store £279.99

Goodmans 21" FASTEXT TV
21" screen
On-screen display
SCART socket
Model 21078
In-store £399.99

Panasonic 21" HOME CINEMA TV
21" screen
Pro-Logic for Cinema
Surround Sound
FST system
Model T21M303DP
was £549.99 In-store £399.99

TOSHIBA 21" HOME CINEMA TV
21" screen
On-screen display
Pro-Logic Surround Sound
FST system
Model 21078
In-store £399.99

SAVE UP TO £130 ON TV/VIDEO PACKAGES

Goodmans TV/VIDEO PACKAGE
21" FASTEXT TV
14" screen
Long play SCART socket
Model 21078
In-store £399.99

Goodmans TV/VIDEO PACKAGE
21" FASTEXT TV
14" screen
Long play SCART socket
Model 21078
In-store £399.99

SHARP TV/VIDEO PACKAGE
21" FASTEXT TV
14" screen
Long play SCART socket
Model 21078
In-store £399.99

THE COMET PRICE CANNOT BE BEATEN

The Comet Price Promise guarantees that if you buy any product from us, then within 14 days find the same offer on sale locally at a lower price, we'll willingly refund the difference, PLUS 10% OF THAT DIFFERENCE. Ask in store for full details.

Christmas MEGA DEALS

INTEREST FREE OPTION WHEN YOU SPEND OVER £199 ON ANYTHING AT COMET

EXTRA SAVINGS WITH THESE VOUCHERS

SONY 8MM CAMCORDER
"The colour LCD monitor makes shooting and replay a pleasure"

WHAT VIDEO & TV MAGAZINE - RECOMMENDED

- 13x zoom lens
- Programme A.E.
- 0.8 lux rating

Model TRV10 was £599.99 previously £549.99

12 MONTHS INTEREST FREE OPTION

£569.99 SAVE £80

Goodmans 28" NICAM STEREO TV

- 86cm visible screen
- Fastext: enables quick access to Teletext pages
- Auto set-up for hassle free tuning
- 2 SCART sockets for improved TV/Video connection

Model 2810NS, was £399.99 In-store £379.99

6 MONTHS INTEREST FREE OPTION

VOUCHER £349.99 SAVE £50

EXCLUSIVE TO COMET

4 FREE COPIES OF TVTIMES WITH ANY TV/VIDEO DEMO

TVTimes film guide has reviews of all the movies on TV for the forthcoming week. There are also listings of the programmes on TV, satellite and cable. To make sure you don't miss out, get your free copies of TVTimes today with any TV/Video demonstration in store.

OPEN LATE UNTIL 9PM

For your convenience most Comet stores are now open until 9pm weekdays.

COMET

For local store details phone free on 0800 425 425. Visit our web site: www.comet.co.uk

HALF PRICE HOME CINEMA KIT

Goodmans DOLBY PRO-LOGIC AMPLIFIER
WITH 5 SPEAKERS
100Watts
What Video & TV Magazine - BEST BUY
Dolby Pro-Logic
Surround Sound
Bass boost
Model DPL905
In-store £149.99

HALF PRICE

EXCLUSIVE TO COMET

SAVE UP TO £70 ON VIDEOS

SONY NICAM STEREO VIDEO
4 recording heads & Long play
2 SCART sockets
Model SLV670
was £249.99
Previously £179.99 In-store £149.99

Goodmans LONG PLAY VIDEO
Digital recording
SCART socket, Model T2500
was £139.99 previously £119.99
In-store £119.99

SAMSUNG VIDEOPLUS+ VIDEO
Long play/Digital tracking
SCART socket
Model SV300
In-store £195.99

SHARP VIDEOPLUS+ VIDEO
Long play/Digital tracking
SCART socket
Model VC671
was £199.99
In-store £179.99

TOSHIBA VIDEOPLUS+ VIDEO
4 recording heads/Long play
VCR/Stereo control
Model V426
was £249.99
In-store £209.99

AIWA NICAM STEREO VIDEO
4 recording heads/Long play
VideoPlus+ Hi2 SCART sockets
Model HVF21000, was £299.99
In-store £259.99

JVC NICAM STEREO VIDEO
4 recording heads/Long play
VideoPlus+ Hi2 SCART sockets
Model HV4545, was £239.99
Previously £199.99 In-store £179.99

Panasonic NICAM STEREO VIDEO
4 recording heads/Long play
VideoPlus+ Hi2 SCART sockets
Model NV4020
In-store £249.99

SAVE UP TO £230 ON CAMCORDERS

JVC VHS-C CAMCORDER
"Multi Control" system makes operation simple
What Video & TV Magazine - RECOMMENDED
2 1/2" digital colour lens
Digital image stabiliser
7.0 lux rating
Model G270
was £299.99
Previously £259.99 In-store £239.99

Goodmans VHS-C CAMCORDER
2 1/2" digital colour lens
Digital image stabiliser
7.0 lux rating
Model G270
was £299.99
Previously £259.99 In-store £239.99

AIWA CAMCORDER
1 1/2" zoom lens/Programme A.E.
2.0 lux rating/Autofocus
Date/time recording
Model VPC70, was £249.99
In-store £219.99

Make someone happy this Christmas

Bell pleads for soldiers who shot suspect

By JAMES LANDALE
POLITICAL REPORTER



Bell: guardsmen had served long enough

MARTIN BELL yesterday launched a fresh campaign to free two Scots Guardsmen jailed for the murder of a Catholic teenager in Belfast.

The former BBC journalist and independent MP for Tatton called for the early release of James Fisher and Mark Wright, who are serving life imprisonment for the shooting in 1992 of 18-year-old Peter McBride.

Mr Bell said the two guardsmen, who were sentenced in 1995 after three years in custody, had been in prison long enough to pay for their crime. Fisher, 28, from Ayr, and Wright, 24, from Arbroath, shot Mr McBride while on patrol in the republican New Lodge area of north Belfast. They believed he was carrying a "coffee-jar bomb" containing shrapnel and Semtex when he ran away after an argument with their patrol commander.

Mr McBride ignored shouted warnings from the guardsmen, continued to run, and was shot in the back. He was found to be unarmed and to have had no parliamentary connections. Mr McBride was the father of two children with his 18-year-old girlfriend, Pauline Devine.

The men are currently being held in Maghaberry Prison, near Lisburn, and their cases will be reviewed again next October. Mr Bell, who is seeking a meeting with Mo

Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, said there was a difference between the "dreadful accident" that took place during a tense confrontation and premeditated cold-blooded murder. He compared the guardsmen's situation with that of Private Lee Clegg, who was released after serving four years of a life sentence for the murder of a Belfast joyrider. Mr Bell has written to Lord McBride, the brother of Peter McBride, who said she was hurt and bewildered by the MPs' involvement. "Those soldiers had to run two streets to catch up with him, and then kneed down to shoot," she said. She wanted them to serve at least ten years.

Leading article, page 21

Guildford bomb man freed early

By MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

A LEADING IRA terrorist who says he planted the Guildford pub bomb in 1974 will be released early from an Irish prison this morning, having never been charged with that offence.

Brendan Dowd is one of nine IRA convicts being freed early by the Irish Government to boost republican confidence in the peace process. But the releases have so angered the loyalist Progressive Unionist Party that it threatened last night to pull out of the Stormont peace talks.

Dowd was given life sen-

tences for three offences in 1976. He later told police that he and his "active service unit" had planted the bomb in the Horse and Groom pub in Guildford, killing five people and injuring 54.

Dowd, 48, has served 21 years for conspiracy to murder, conspiracy to cause explosions and the attempted murder of policemen. He was due to be freed by the summer of 2001.

The releases will mean that Ireland has let 16 IRA men out early since the ceasefire was restored in July.

BANK OF SCOTLAND BANKING DIRECT

With effect from the 1st January 1998, the Renault Laguna Prize Draw promotion will cease. The December Winners will be notified in January, 1998.

حکومت الامم

The serial killers stalking Soapland

BY IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

DEATH has become so commonplace in British television soap operas that they are creating a war-zone environment which distorts the nation's concept of violence, according to research by a senior fellow at a leading teaching hospital.

The study, published today in the *British Medical Journal*, shows that the chances of soap characters surviving to old age are much less than those of a bomb disposal expert, Formula One driver or steeplejack. Disease is rampant, but violent death, including murder, suicide, overdose and crashes are 20 times more common than in reality.

"Characters in these serials would be advised to wear good protective clothing designed to withstand sharp implements, sudden impacts and fire and to receive regular counselling for the psychological impact of living in an environment akin to a war zone," says Tim

Crayford, 33, of the public health and epidemiology department at King's College Hospital, South London.

He studied the 85 deaths that occurred in Coronation Street, Brookside, Emmerdale and Albert Square in the 12 years since *EastEnders* first appeared in 1985. He found that characters tended to die young from a variety of obscure and often violent causes, including a plane crash in *Emmerdale* which killed four.

Of the total, 54 met a violent end and the others died of diseases including breast cancer, Aids and an undiagnosed virus that killed three in *Brookside*. People in the real world with cancer and other serious diseases have a better chance of surviving for five years than a soap character.

Death rates varied between the programmes. Fourteen died in *Coronation Street*, 17 in *EastEnders*, 26 in *Brookside* and 28 in *Emmerdale*. "Brookside Close and Emmerdale could be the most dangerous streets in the United Kingdom," Dr Crayford says.

He accepts that producers will exaggerate the dangers of real life, but says that the programmes are meant to mirror reality. "It seems sad that our interest in them has to be about as dangerous as Formula One racing... Could the exaggerated portrayal of these violent and dangerous lives be contributing to our distorted national perceptions about violent crime and death?"



A lot of what you fancy does you good

BY IAN MURRAY

MIDDLE AGED men with active sex lives have a far better chance of reaching a ripe old age, according to research published today. The more often they make love the longer they can expect to live, says a report in the *British Medical Journal*.

The authors say the findings are convincing enough for a health fitness campaign to be based on them. "Most of the health messages are about telling us to stop doing things and they tend to have disappointing results," said George Davey Smith, professor of clinical epidemiology at Bristol University.

"Making love may be the only form of exercise for some people and telling them to do more of something they enjoy could be beneficial."

The report says that health messages could be based on the "at least five a day" campaign to increase fruit and vegetable consumption — "although the numerical imperative might have to be adjusted."

The study was based on a group of 918 men aged between 45 and 59 living in Caerphilly, South Wales, and five nearby villages, between 1979 and 1983. They were volunteers for a study carried out to investigate health and social patterns in their age group.

When recruited they were all asked how often they had sexual intercourse and were classified into categories ranging from "never" to "daily". After ten years it was found that a total of 150 had died: 67 from coronary heart disease and 83 from other causes.

Comparing the deaths with the medical records, the researchers found that the mortality risk in the group with the high frequency of intercourse was less than half that in other groups.

Characters are dying to attract your attention

Ratings war has seen a big rise in the number of casualties, writes Carol Midgley

SINCE Martha Longhurst expired from a heart attack in the snug of Coronation Street's Rover's Return in 1964, British soaps have suffered more than their fair share of untimely deaths. But the tendency to bump off characters has grown alarmingly in recent years.

In the past 12 months, *Coronation Street* has seen off four characters: the dithering Derek Wilton (stress-induced heart attack), the taxi driver Don Brennan (car fire), the cleaner Joyce Smedley (hit by a car) and Betty Turpin's new husband, Billy Williams (natural causes). Its most spectacular death was that of Alan Bradley, the Machiavellian businessman hit by a Blackpool tram as he chased Rita Sullivan down the promenade. Ken

Barlow has lost two wives (to a drug overdose and electrocution), both his parents, brother, nephew and Uncle Albert Tatlock.

Brookside is notorious for the most far-fetched deaths. Trevor Jordache was buried under the patio after his abused wife stabbed him with a kitchen knife. Sue Sullivan and her young son, Danny, fell from scaffolding and Damon Grant was stabbed on a day trip to York. Most recently, Matthew and Emily Farnham were killed in a car crash and Gladys, mother of Elaine Johnson, was smothered with a pillow.

John Bowman, editor of *Inside*

Soap magazine, said: "British soaps do seem to be much gloomier than Australian ones. That is what makes them better: they are grittier and darker. A good death can put two million on the viewing figures. When a character dies, it usually means their contract has ended or they have upset the producer."

This year has been one of carnage for *Coronation Street*. Billy Williams died off-screen, which is the biggest indignity. The actor doesn't even get to do the big death scene."

Emmerdale has raised its death quota considerably since the early 1980s, when, as *Emmerdale Farm*,

it was regarded as the television equivalent of *The Archers*. Four years ago, four characters died in a Lockie-style air crash and this year Ron Hudson died from Huntington's disease, Frank Tate from a heart attack, Kate Sugden of a brain haemorrhage, and Linda Fowler in a car crash.

EastEnders has seen the gangland murder of "Dirty" Den Watts, the brain haemorrhage of Arthur Fowler and the stabbing of the pub manager Eddie Royal. Pete Beale died off-screen in a car crash and Mark Fowler's wife Jill died from Aids-related cancer.

An *EastEnders* spokeswoman

said only 1 per cent of characters had been killed. There had been 15 on-screen deaths and two reported. "*EastEnders* is a drama and, like any drama, explores the age-old complexities of life and death," she said. "The *EastEnders* data for this article was taken off unofficial Web sites and the findings should be taken with a pinch of salt. It is probably more dangerous to be a Shakespeare character."

A *Coronation Street* spokeswoman said: "This is not real life. It is a drama."

John Peake, a soap writer, said British soaps could not be compared to American ones, many of

which had ludicrous storylines. "The US soaps are outrageous. People find underwater cities outside their towns and characters become possessed by the devil."

He said that, although the Australian soaps had generally less tragedy, they had a high quota of deaths because the turnover of actors was so quick. In *Neighbours* recently, Cheryl Stark was hit by a car and died in Ramsay Street. "The scene was heavily cut in Britain because it was considered too distressing," Mr Peake said.

The *Neighbours* character Helen Daniels will die in a scene to be shown in Britain next year. "She dies watching a video of Scott and Charlene's wedding. It was probably from boredom," Mr Peake said.

Sainsbury's, for those with a good nose for a bargain.

<p>Hardy's Nottage Hill Chardonnay £4.99 £3.99</p> <p>Save £1</p>	<p>From Chateau de Segure £4.99 £3.99</p> <p>Save £1</p>
<p>Sainsbury's Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon £3.99 £2.99</p> <p>Save £1</p>	<p>Sainsbury's Blanc de Noirs Champagne £4.99 £2.99</p> <p>Save £2</p>

Great Offers for Christmas at Sainsbury's

OFFERS END 31 JANUARY 1998. THE LAW DOES NOT PERMIT THE SALE OF ALCOHOL TO PERSONS UNDER THE AGE OF 18. ALSO AVAILABLE AT SAINSBURY'S SHOPS CENTRES. PRODUCTS SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY. WE'D BE INTERESTED IN YOUR COMMENTS: WWW.SAINSBURYS.CO.UK

New at Boots

Beauty & The Beast - The Enchanted Christmas.
RRP £15.99 £13.99
(Available to buy for a limited period only)

Cinderella -
New digitally remastered version.
RRP £16.99 £13.99



The Right Chemistry

<http://www.boots.co.uk>

Available in larger Boots stores. *Until 31 January 1998. Subject to availability.

هكنا من النحل

Straw entitled to keep Hindley in jail for life

Moors murderer vows to take fight for freedom to a higher court, reports Richard Ford

MYRA HINDLEY, the Moors murderer, vowed last night to fight on for her freedom after she failed in her attempt to overturn the Home Secretary's decision that she must die in prison.

As Hindley prepared to take her fight to the Court of Appeal, the House of Lords and eventually the European Courts, an inquiry was under way into how the *Daily Mail* was able to publish the result of the court challenge before it was delivered. Lord Bingham of Cornhill, the Lord Chief Justice, suggested that legal advisers for either the Home Secretary or Hindley were responsible for the leak.

He told David Pannick, QC, for the Government, and Edward Fitzgerald, QC, for Hindley, to carry out an investigation. Lord Bingham said it was "utterly unacceptable" that parties involved in a case should learn of the decision through the media.

In his 35-page judgment Lord Bingham ruled that the Home Secretary had the power to decide that a life sentence imposed on an offender "will mean life". There remains a chance

that Hindley, 55, could be released because Jack Straw has said the whole-life tariff could be reduced in the event of "exceptional progress" while an offender was in jail.

After the ruling Mr Pannick said that if Hindley wished to apply for a fresh review of her case on the ground that she had made exceptional progress in prison, it would be considered by Mr Straw.

Hindley has served 31 years for murdering Lesley Ann Downey, 10, and Edward Evans, 17. In 1987 she admitted involvement in the murders of John Kilbride, 12, Keith Bennett, 12, and Pauline Reade, 16.

The Lord Chief Justice, sitting with Mr Justice Hooper and Mr Justice Auld, rejected claims by lawyers acting for Hindley that a provisional minimum sentence of 30 years was unlawfully increased to a whole-life tariff. But he expressed unease at the fact that decisions on how long convicted murderers should remain in prison were taken by politicians rather than the judiciary.

He said: "I part from the case

uneasily conscious that the issues that may really underlie the case are not before us. There is room for serious debate whether the task of determining how long convicted murderers should serve in prison for punishment for the crimes should be undertaken by the judiciary (as in the case of discretionary life prisoners), or, as now, by the executive."

Lord Bingham added: "The applicant clearly feels that she is held hostage to public opinion, condemned to pass the rest of her life in prison, although no longer judged a danger to anyone, because of her notoriety and the public obloquy that would fall on any Home Secretary who ordered her release."

Hindley had challenged a decision by Michael Howard made earlier this year and reaffirmed by Mr Straw last month that a whole-life tariff was necessary to meet the needs of "retribution and deterrence".

The Lord Chief Justice said that the policy announced by Mr Howard in 1994 had been unlawful because it failed to make allowance for the

possibility of a prisoner making exceptional progress while in jail. However, the amended policy unveiled by his successor, Mr Straw, last month, which allows for exceptional progress, was not unlawful.

Outside the court Winnie Johnson, the mother of Keith Bennett, whose body has never been found, said she was pleased by the court's decision.

"She's staying in prison which is the main thing, but I don't understand why she constantly keeps appealing. This is done with taxpayer's money, people work hard for someone so evil to keep doing this. This whole thing just seems to go on and I just want an end to it."

Ann West, the terminally ill mother of Lesley Ann Downey, said: "I will rest in peace but I will haunt that woman. I will be on her shoulder morning, noon and night."

Lord Longford, who was in court for the judgment, said: "The battle goes on. The justice of the case remains as before. It is quite iniquitous that any human being should be told they have to stay in prison until they die."



Myra Hindley: she may claim she has made exceptional progress while in prison

Boy dies in strangling game that went wrong

By JOANNA BALE

POLICE warned parents and children yesterday of the dangers of a strangling game after a schoolboy died while experimenting with it.

Liam Hart, 11, was found unconscious in a bedroom at his home on Wednesday with a towelling cord from a dressing gown wrapped around his neck. His mother tried to revive him but he was dead on arrival at hospital.

Detectives said they believed Liam, from Stockport, Greater Manchester, had died playing a game that local children called "Rising Sun", in which they partially strangle themselves to get a "tingling sensation".

Police said they believed that Liam had played it before. They were convinced he had not committed suicide and asked teachers and parents to be on the lookout for the activity, so-called because children's faces turn red as they half-strangle themselves.

Detective Inspector Kenny Caldwell, of Stockport police, said: "It's certainly a game the police have never heard of or one that teachers have been aware of. We have to find out who showed Liam how to play the game. We have had an indication he tried it before."

He added: "Anything along these lines interferes with the bloodstream and could have

fatal consequences. I have an 11-year-old son myself and I shall be speaking to him."

Liam was a pupil at Avondale High School in Cheadle Heath, where staff yesterday issued a warning about the game at assembly.

Eric Jackson, the head teacher, said he was very concerned about the circumstances of Liam's death. "Until this morning, I had no idea what 'Rising Sun' was. We have spoken to students and tried to give them the facts. We are trying our damndest to make sure this doesn't happen to any other youngsters."

"Liam was a smashing little lad. He was everybody's next-door neighbour, a warm, friendly and caring lad. He always worked hard and was very eager to help and had lots and lots of friends."

Mr Jackson added that he had been told yesterday of an incident at another Stockport school, less than a fortnight ago, when a child had to be given medical treatment after playing the game. "In that case the outcome was not so tragic."

He added: "I spoke to some girls from my school this morning who had tried the 'Rising Sun' game and asked them if I should've known what was going on, but they told me, 'how could you?'"



A cross-section of one of the 14 petrified pine trees

Early Christmas trees unearthed

By PAUL WILKINSON

THE 310 million-year-old ancestors of today's Christmas trees have been discovered during work at an open-cast mining site.

Fourteen petrified trees, said to be the earliest examples of today's conifers, have been exposed at the Prior's Close site near Chester-le-Street, Co Durham. At first the primitive trees, some up to ten metres long, were thought to be giant ferns, but Professor Andrew Scott, a palaeo-botanist at the University of London, has identified them as very early pine trees — the first to be found in Britain.

Scientists are especially excited as, thanks to a flow of

minerals into the trees shortly after they fell during a cataclysmic flood, their interior structures have been perfectly preserved.

At the time the trees were growing, the site was on the Equator and was a low-lying, hot and humid swamp. Experts believe the trees grew on higher ground on the edge of the swamp. The chemical composition of the swamp water helped to preserve the timber.

Brian Young, in charge of the Geological Survey's mapping exercise in the area, said: "I suppose it means that Co Durham is the home of the oldest Christmas trees in Britain."

PLANTED CHRISTMAS GIFT ARRANGEMENTS FROM £4.99

DESIGNED EXCLUSIVELY FOR HOMEBASE



£5.99
AZALEA IN CERAMIC POT
12cm Pot. Choice of colours



38% OFF
£2.49
CYCLAMEN
12cm Pot
Choice of colours
Was £3.99 Save £1.50



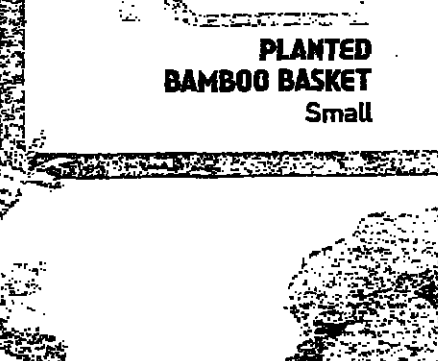
£1.99
CHRISTMAS CACTUS
Schlumbergera
9cm Pot



PLANTED GREEN WILLOW BASKET Large
£14.99



PLANTED GREEN WILLOW BASKET Medium
£9.99



PLANTED GREEN WILLOW BASKET Extra Large
£19.99



PLANTED BAMBOO BASKET Small
£4.99



PLANTED GREEN WILLOW BASKET Medium
£9.99



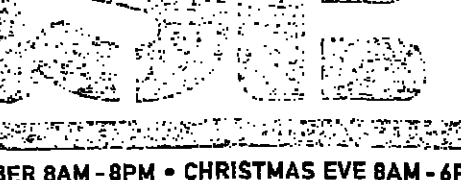
PLANTED GREEN WILLOW BASKET Extra Large
£19.99



PLANTED BAMBOO BASKET Small
£4.99



£1.49
POINSETTIA IN SMALL CERAMIC POT
6cm Pot



THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE
HOMEBASE

MONDAY-THURSDAY 8AM - 8PM • FRIDAY 8AM - 9PM • SATURDAY 8AM - 8PM • SUNDAY 10AM - 4PM • TUESDAY 23RD DECEMBER 8AM - 8PM • CHRISTMAS EVE 8AM - 6PM
CHRISTMAS DAY CLOSED • BOXING DAY SCOTLAND 10AM - 5PM ENGLAND CLOSED • SATURDAY 27TH DECEMBER 8AM - 8PM
Prices marked include discount. All sizes are approximate and not to scale. Merchandise subject to availability. Products and offers may vary in Northern Ireland and Eire. 15 stores in Scotland open Sunday 9am-6pm. Opening times may vary. Please call 0845 801 800 during office hours for details of your nearest store.

Dewar's 300-day Bill revises 300 years of history

BY SHIRLEY ENGLISH

THE legislation that will create the first Scottish Parliament for almost 300 years was published yesterday by Donald Dewar, Scottish Secretary, who hailed it as an historic and radical document which would provide a "pathway" to a new constitutional framework for the United Kingdom.

Unveiling the Scotland Bill, Mr Dewar said: "In well under 300 days we have set in train the biggest change in three hundred years of Scottish history. The Government

has moved quickly to keep our promise, the promise to deliver a Scottish Parliament."

He said the Bill fulfilled the ambitions of the Government's devolution White Paper, which had been given the clear and enthusiastic backing of Scots who voted in the referendum in September. It would establish a devolved Parliament in Edinburgh able to make its own laws and with the power to vary income tax by 3p in the pound. There were "no hidden taxes", he

said. Echoing the words of the late John Smith, former Labour Party leader, Mr Dewar said the Parliament was "the settled will of the Scottish people" and called on the House of Lords not to delay or disrupt its passage through Parliament. He added: "This Bill will give Scotland the power to boost its self-confidence, economically, culturally and politically."

The Bill fleshes out the powers laid down in the devolution White Paper, published in July, with only a few minor alterations to plug the gaps. These include giving the Scottish Parliament the power to legislate on dangerous dogs, but reserving powers at Westminster over "outer space" and "dealing with an enemy".

Most notably the Scottish Parliament will be able to move at its own pace to legislate on the implementation of European laws. Scottish Ministers and officials will be able to participate in the Council of Ministers' meetings, but only as part of the UK delegation.

The Bill also outlines a more powerful "disciplinary" role than was first envisaged for the Scottish Secretary. He will

be able to overrule the Parliament and halt legislation he believes is inappropriate, and he will have powers to ensure the UK's international treaties are implemented in Scotland.

The Scotland Bill will get its second reading in early January and will then go to a parliamentary committee. It is expected to receive Royal Assent in October and elections to the Scottish Parliament will be held in 1999. The Scottish

Parliament will sit for the first time in 2000.

It will have a powerful new First Minister — equivalent to a Scottish Prime Minister — and a Presiding Officer, whose role will mirror that of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

The Bill includes the provision to review the number of Scottish MPs at Westminster through the Boundary Commission, as promised in the

White Paper, and ensures the sovereignty of the Crown: all Scottish Bills will require Royal Assent.

Powers to be reserved by Westminster include the UK constitution, foreign policy, macro-economic policy and fiscal and monetary affairs, employment legislation, social security policy, regulation of certain professions and transport safety.

The Bill was given a broad

welcome yesterday by both the Scottish Nationalists and Liberal Democrats. However, both parties indicated they would be tabling amendments. Alex Salmond, leader of the SNP, said the Bill displayed some "Westminster paranoia" in retaining powers over such matters as the 1952 Hypnotism Act. He said the SNP would concentrate on tabling amendments to strengthen the Parliament's

powers in Europe, on fiscal policy and broadcasting.

The Liberal Democrats would be asking for assurances that the Parliament be exempt from some sex discrimination laws so at least 40 per cent of MSPs would be women. They were also concerned that moral issues, such as abortion law, would be retained at Westminster.

Diary, page 20



Scottish Secretary Donald Dewar in Glasgow yesterday, where he described the new Scotland Bill as a radical and historic document

MAIN POINTS

- Scottish Parliament will have 129 MSPs, with First Minister appointed by the Queen. First elections by proportional representation in 1999 and then every four years. Parliament will sit for first time in 2000.
- It will have powers to make laws on all domestic matters, including health, education, the law, transport, local government and the environment.
- A number of key powers will be reserved at Westminster, including the UK constitution, foreign policy, economic policy, defence, medical ethics, employment law and Europe.
- The Scottish Parliament will continue to receive its share of UK public expenditure in the form of the Scottish Block Grant, which is currently £14 billion.
- It will have powers by 2000-01 to vary the basic rate of income tax by 3p; this will be payable by UK residents who live more than half the year in Scotland.

Dixons

UP TO 5 FREE CDs

ON SELECTED PORTABLE HI-FI
CHOOSE FROM
OVER 200 TITLES

RADIO CASSETTES

MATSUI RTR203
RADIO CASSETTE
• AM/FM radio.
• Tone control.
• Main lead.
£14.99
EXCLUSIVE TO DSG Retail Ltd

MORPHY RICHARDS RC240
RADIO CASSETTE
• FM/AM/W/M tuner.
• Main/battery operation.
• Microphone socket.
• Wets £24.99.
£19.99
EXCLUSIVE TO DSG Retail Ltd

HITACHI TRK05
RADIO CASSETTE
• AM/FM radio.
• Tone control.
• Available in Black or White.
• Wets £29.99.
£24.99
EXCLUSIVE TO DSG Retail Ltd

MATSUI WF220D
WORLD BAND RADIO
FM/AM/W/M
digital radio.
• Wets £79.99.
£39.99
EXCLUSIVE TO DSG Retail Ltd

CD RADIO CASSETTES

MATSUI CD67
CD RADIO CASSETTE
• AM/FM stereo radio.
• Programmable CD.
• Auto-stop.
£42.99
EXCLUSIVE TO DSG Retail Ltd

BUSH SRC181
CD RADIO CASSETTE
• 20 track programmable CD.
• FM/LW/MW stereo radio.
• Bass boost.
• In-store Price £29.99.
£49.99
EXCLUSIVE TO DSG Retail Ltd

SANYO MCD2100
CD RADIO CASSETTE
• AM/FM stereo radio.
• Programmable CD.
• Tone control.
• Analogue tuner.
• Wets £79.99.
£69.99
EXCLUSIVE TO DSG Retail Ltd

HITACHI CX110
CD RADIO CASSETTE
• AM/FM Stereo Radio.
• Programmable CD.
• Tone control.
• Auto-stop.
• Wets £99.99.
£79.99
EXCLUSIVE TO DSG Retail Ltd

MATSUI CD67
CD RADIO CASSETTE
• AM/FM stereo radio.
• Programmable CD.
• Auto-stop.
£59.99
EXCLUSIVE TO DSG Retail Ltd

CD CAR SCOOP

ROADSTAR KIT5847
CD BOOT CHANGER
• 6 CD Boot Changer.
• FM/LW/MW Digital
Tuner. Wets £299.99.
£199.99
HURRY! LIMITED STOCK

SANYO MCD2250
CD RADIO CASSETTE
• Digital tuner.
• Remote control.
• FM/LW/MW stereo radio.
• Fully programmable CD.
• Wets £189.99.
£99.99
EXCLUSIVE TO DSG Retail Ltd

SONY CFS33
CD RADIO CASSETTE
• Remote control.
• Digital tuner with 30 presets.
• FM/AM/W/M stereo radio.
• Repeat function.
£119.99
EXCLUSIVE TO DSG Retail Ltd

PHILIPS AZ8267
CD RADIO CASSETTE
• Remote control.
• Digital tuner with 29 presets.
• AM/FM/W/M stereo radio.
• Wets £149.99. In-store Price £129.99.
£119.99
EXCLUSIVE TO DSG Retail Ltd

aiwa NSX52
PORTABLE HI-FI
• Digital synthesised tuner.
• Super T-tuner.
• Front loading CD player.
• Wets £269.99.
£169.99
EXCLUSIVE TO DSG Retail Ltd

Dixons

There's a Great Deal going on

PRICE CHECK
Every week we check the prices of hundreds of products in the national press to make sure that Dixons Price Check prices can't be beaten!

3 WAYS TO BUY
350 STORES NATIONWIDE
WEB SITE: www.dixons.co.uk
24 HOUR ORDER HOTLINE
08000 68 28 68

WATCH OUT FOR OUR VOUCHER SPECIALS!
Look out for the special voucher savings on selected products throughout this advertisement. Simply take this advert to any Dixons store to claim your discount. One voucher saving per purchase. Not for use with other offers. Branch use only. Discount using Code 4 (Read Offer). HURRY! These voucher prices valid only until Wednesday 24th December 1997.

Westminster pays, but MPs will call the tune



Magnus Linklater believes the Scottish parliament will have immense influence

Yesterday may have been an "historic day for Scotland", but it was also a day for heavy reading. The Scotland Bill comes in at 40,000 words, 116 clauses and eight supplementary schedules. We are told it took 60,000 "person hours" to complete: it will thus be very politically correct.

It contains all the mind-numbing sub-sections that will determine whether the new Scottish parliament will work or not. There is much here for Tam Dalyell, MP, that master of the fine detail, to get his teeth into. He will find no answer to his famous "West Lothian question", but he will be struck by the constant emphasis on the continuing role of Westminster, the weight given to the Secretary of State for Scotland, and the significant voice Scotland is to have in Europe.

The central anomaly of Scottish MPs being allowed to vote on English matters, while English MPs have no equivalent say on Scottish matters, remains. However, from the very first clause, reading simply: "There shall be a Scottish Parliament", its remit is clearly set out. This is going to be a parliament wielding immense influence over civic affairs in Scotland — the health service, the criminal justice system, education and housing among others. It will still be financed by the block grant determined by Westminster, but within that it will have freedom of choice.

The Queen retains her traditional constitutional role. It is she who appoints the First Minister, as the Scottish Prime Minister will be known, somewhat bleakly. It is she who receives his resignation. It is she who dissolves a Scottish parliament under the Scottish Seal if a proclamation is made which alters the day set down for a general election — the first Thursday in May every five years. The seal referred to is the one under which the Act of Union was drawn up, so there is no doubting that the new Scottish parliament will be a unionist body.

The Secretary of State

will retain a more powerful role than was at first thought. For example, if he thinks it necessary, he will be able to intervene to prohibit legislation from gaining Royal Assent. He will also have powers to prevent the Scottish executive from taking any action he believes is not in line with the United Kingdom's international treaties.

It is also clear that much thought has been given to the kind of members who will make up the parliament. Election will be by proportional representation, and individuals will be able to stand both on constituency and regional lists. The aim appears to be to loosen the party hold and to ensure that the parliament is not dominated by party hacks. Whether this will work in practice remains to be seen. Peers will be allowed to stand, as well as church ministers, so there will at the very least be greater diversity than in the Commons.

The past that will be watched with most interest is that of the Presiding Officer — the equivalent of the Speaker. This will be the first post to be filled — by election from among the members — and the incumbent will run the parliament's business. His remit seems to be vast, and it is he who will have to control and shape this emergent body as it develops committees, standing orders and all the familiar paraphernalia of a democratic instrument.

Perhaps the major surprise is the role that a new Scotland may acquire in Europe. Members of the Scottish parliament will be able to attend the European Council of Ministers as part of the UK delegation, and the Scottish Parliament will be given powers to legislate itself on European laws. The parliament will be given powers to deal directly with the European Union and, for instance, to move faster or slower than Westminster if it sees European legislation as helping or hindering.

Here, possibly, lie the seeds of conflict with Westminster. There will doubtless be many more.

After Dolly, meet Polly the therapeutic lamb

THE Scottish scientists responsible for Dolly the cloned sheep have now produced Polly — a lamb which makes a human blood-clotting protein. Polly was made from sheep foetal cells, modified by the introduction of a human gene. As a clone she is less remarkable than Dolly, who was made from adult cells, but the technique used to make her is likely to prove more valuable in the long run.

She is not by any means the first animal made which is capable of producing human proteins in its milk. But the team at the Roslin Research Institute in Roslin, Midlothian, report in *Science* that their method is far more efficient than those used earlier, and can also be used to select the sex of the lamb.

The previous hit-or-miss method used at Roslin and elsewhere involved injecting the human gene into an egg, and then putting it back into a mother sheep in the hope that her lamb would express the human protein made by that gene in her milk. Only a minority did, so the method

Nigel Hawkes reports on how scientists have developed a technique for creating lambs to combat human disease

was wasteful — many pregnancies failed to produce transgenic lambs. The new method makes it possible to ensure that the gene is integrated into the cells before they are used to replace the DNA in the egg. That creates a higher success rate.

Dr Ron James, managing director of PPL, the company linked to the Roslin Institute, said yesterday: "The production of transgenic livestock by nuclear transfer allows products to be developed far more rapidly and uses fewer animals than earlier methods. The technique also allows us to develop therapeutics that would previously have been impossible or uneconomical."

In Polly's case, the gene used was that which makes Factor IX, the blood-clotting

agent which is missing in men with haemophilia B. At present, such men are treated with Factor IX extracted from human blood. But extracting it from sheep's milk should be cheaper and free from risks of infection, says the scientific team, led by Dr Angelika Schmiedeke.

Foetal cells were taken from Poll Dorset lambs, and the Factor IX gene inserted. The cells were maintained in culture and tested to see whether the gene had been successfully integrated. Only then were the cells inserted into eggs from Scottish Blackface ewes, from which the ewe's own DNA had been removed.

The eggs were then replaced in the ewes and brought to birth. Two problems emerged. The ewes did not give birth

spontaneously, but had to be induced, and there was a high stillbirth rate of 46 per cent. It is hoped that further development of the technique will solve these problems.

Dr Ian Wilmut, the team leader, said the result was "tremendously encouraging, and a major step towards our goal of being able to make very precise genetic modifications in livestock species". The technique has been patented by the Institute, which says it has great commercial potential.

Its success in producing Dolly is saluted by *Science* as "breakthrough of the year". It beat such achievements as the Mars Pathfinder mission, the extraction of Neanderthal DNA and the identification of strange sources of gamma rays in the sky.

Areas in which the Polly technology could be useful, the institute says, include transplantation of organs from pigs to humans, because it would allow the pigs to be modified so that their organs were not recognised as foreign by the human recipients.



Polly the man-made lamb with her Scottish Blackface surrogate mother

Aids scare woman 'has clean bill of health'

By PAUL WILKINSON

ONE of the two women at the centre of an Aids scare on Britain's largest army base said yesterday that a new blood test had proved she was not carrying the virus.

Lindsay Griffiths, 19, is awaiting confirmation of the test at a hospital near the base at Catterick, North Yorkshire. She said: "It is just such a relief to hear this news. I have been to hell and back these last few days and I feel angry at the way I have been treated."

Earlier this week Colonel Neil Donaldson, the garrison deputy commander, warned his 7,000 troops about "at least" two women who were diagnosed HIV-positive, but were continuing promiscuous liaisons with soldiers. He refused to identify them.

Miss Griffiths and her friend Charlotte "Bonnie" Clarke, 20, said they believed they were the women to whom he was referring. They live in Colburn near the base, and the activities at Miss Clarke's flat have been the subject of complaints by neighbours.

Man finds mouse baked in can of beans

By JOANNA BALE

A SAINSBURY'S customer eating baked beans straight from the tin came across what he thought was a piece of string. He tugged at it and, to his horror, pulled out a mouse by the tail. The animal had been cooked in the tin.

The beans were bought in New Cross, south London, in November last year by Robert Howard, from Brockley in southeast London. This week HL Foods, which produced the own-brand beans for Sainsbury's, was fined £8,000 by magistrates at Greenwich, southeast London, after pleading guilty to offences under the Food Safety Act.

A spokeswoman for Lewisham council, which brought the prosecution, said yesterday: "Nobody knows for sure at what point of the process the mouse got in. The beans are sieved and blanched, tomato sauce is added and the tins are sealed and cooked at 130 degrees. The mouse's stomach was full of starch so it may have been eating the beans before it was boiled."

More than 12,000 tins from the same batch were removed from supermarket shelves by Sainsbury's. A spokeswoman for the company said: "Food safety is one of our top priorities. Any foreign object found in our products is taken very seriously and as soon as we knew there was a problem we launched an investigation with HL Foods, who immediately admitted liability."

"We are now satisfied that there are tighter measures in place at HL Foods and environmental health officers have also checked the factory and are fully satisfied."

Robin Brooks, sales and marketing director at HL Foods, of Long Sutton, Lincolnshire, said: "We undertook a detailed review of procedures and have tightened our already rigorous safety checks to ensure this incident never happens again."

The company, which still supplies Sainsbury's and other supermarket chains, is in discussions with Mr Howard over compensation.

NEWS IN BRIEF



Hillary Clinton

First lady linked to pit town

Hillary Clinton has been invited to trace her family roots in the former mining community of Stanley in Co Durham in the North East.

Local historians believe Mrs Clinton, whose maiden name is Rodham, is linked to the Rodhams who worked and lived in Durham pit villages in the last century. In 1883 the man thought to be her great grandfather, Jonathan Rodham, emigrated with his family to Pennsylvania. The county council has now invited Mrs Clinton to see where her family came from.

£1m damages

A man with an extreme form of cerebral palsy was awarded agreed damages of £1 million at the High Court in London. Alan Dix, 24, suffered severe asphyxiation shortly before birth at Westminster Hospital, London.

Drugs lesson

Dixons City Technology College, Bradford, the recipient of an award from West Yorkshire Police for its anti-drugs policy, has suspended two boys, aged 14 and 15, after they were found with cannabis during a routine search.

Wader count

The British Trust for Ornithology is appealing for bird-watchers to help it to complete a pan-European survey of shoreline waders by the end of January. Anyone interested should telephone 01842 750050.

informative:

With effect from 5 January 1998 the following interest rates will apply:

TESA				
All credit balances	7.75% p.a. (Tax free)			

High Interest Savings Account (minimum £1,000)				
Credit Interest	Gross % p.a.	Gross CAR % p.a.	Net % p.a.	Net CAR % p.a.
£1 to £2,499	4.50	4.50	4.50	3.65
£2,500 to £4,999	5.00	5.11	4.00	4.07
£5,000 and over	5.50	5.64	4.40	4.48

Direct Interest Savings Account (minimum £1,000)				
Credit Interest	Gross % p.a.	Gross CAR % p.a.	Net % p.a.	Net CAR % p.a.
£1 to £999	0.50	0.50	0.40	0.40
£1,000 to £2,499	4.75	4.83	3.80	3.85
£2,500 to £4,999	5.50	5.61	4.40	4.47
£5,000 to £9,999	5.65	5.81	5.32	5.42
£10,000 and over	7.00	7.18	5.80	5.71

Tax Free: the rate payable where the interest is exempt from the tax applicable to interest on savings.

Gross: the rate before the deduction of tax applicable to interest on savings, currently 20%.

Net: the rate after the deduction of tax applicable to interest on savings, currently 20%.

CARs: Compounded Annual Rate is the true gross/net return if the interest payments are retained in the account.

First Direct is a division of Midland Bank plc

Member HSBC Group

CHRISTMAS IS COMING EARLY FOR SOMEONE THIS YEAR.

SUPERDRAW JACKPOT THIS SATURDAY.

IT COULD BE YULE.



THE NATIONAL LOTTERY

© Camelot Group plc 1997

If two or more players match the six main numbers drawn, the jackpot is shared between them. www.national-lottery.co.uk

PLAYERS MUST BE 16 OR OVER



L. Ron Hubbard

One of the Most Remarkable
Lives of the 20th Century



From friends who respect and admire him

The gift of freedom from pain and upset that Ron has made available to me and the world, will not be forgotten."
*John Travolta
Actor*

I have seen the results of the drug rehabilitation methods developed by L. Ron Hubbard and they can only be described as miraculous. I know no other person who has contributed so much for the benefit of so many."
*Lord McNair
House of Lords*

I first realized he was a genius because of his contribution to my field. Later I discovered that his brilliance embraced the arts and humanities as well. L. Ron Hubbard was a true Renaissance man — philosopher, scientist, writer and artist."
*William L. Marcus, Ph. D.
Internationally recognized Scientist and Toxicologist*

Future generations will live in a saner, happier and more peaceful world because of the enormous contributions of L. Ron Hubbard's writings and technology."
*Anne Archer
Actress*

There are those men whose wisdom, honesty and teaching lift all others with them like the tide, to new heights of human excellence..... because they were here among us. Such a man was L. Ron Hubbard."
*L. Fletcher Prouty
Colonel, United States
Air Force, Retired*

Mr. Hubbard's technology saved my life. It doesn't get much better than that."
Kirstie Alley, Actress

In my opinion, L. Ron Hubbard's work in the drug rehabilitation field IS 'the field of drug rehabilitation.' Finally, someone discovered why a person would turn to drugs and alcohol in their life and how to break free of those self-destructive patterns to live a happier, more productive life. He has given us a road out that would be more aptly named 'life rehabilitation.'"
*Mark Isham
Grammy Award Winning
Recording Artist and
Academy Award Nominated
Film Composer*

The gift L. Ron Hubbard has for you, me and all mankind is peace and freedom. Peace and freedom to discover and know."
*Terry Jastrow
Seven-time Emmy Award
Winning Producer/Director*

Having practiced medicine for fifty years, I have concluded that L. Ron Hubbard is clearly among that handful of individuals who have made remarkable and very major contributions to the betterment of the individual. That he had the courage to challenge outdated notions and introduce entirely workable ideas only underscores his greatness."
*Theron G. Randolph, M.D.
Founder of the American
Academy of
Environmental Medicine*

A sensitive, uniquely spirited creative genius, whose unique discoveries, insights and understanding about the nature of man and life have brought peace of mind and comfort to millions. L. Ron Hubbard was one of the most brilliant minds of our time."
*Professor Joseph Paige
Former President and Dean,
Shaw Divinity School*

I have found many writers and teachers simply reiterate that which is known and accepted. Seldom in a lifetime does there come a man who challenges the axioms. L. Ron Hubbard was such a man. Not satisfied with the status quo he reached for the stars. In so doing he forced the rest of us to move from our complacency and to know why we believe what we believe."
*Dr. Donald N. Sills
President, Coalition for
Religious Freedom
Washington, D.C.*

L Ron Hubbard set a star-high goal for us. He documented it with his writings and lectures. He taught it with pure love. He's left us nothing but pure inspiration."
*Chick Corea
Eight-time Grammy Award
Winning Musician*

L Ron Hubbard was an extraordinary human being whose contributions to education in the field of literacy should be applauded by all. An explorer, teacher, entrepreneur, writer, and staunch patriot, he followed his own path, never allowing anyone to set boundaries on what he could or would do. We should all learn from the example of his life, and strive to make ourselves and the world a better place."
*Dr. Harry Kloor, Ph. D.
Producer, Writer, Educator*

Without a doubt, L. Ron Hubbard is one of the most prolific and influential writers of the 20th century."
*Stephen V. Whaley
Professor of English and
Foreign Languages*

Words cannot express my undying appreciation to Mr. L. Ron Hubbard, for fulfilling the prophesies of long ago, and bringing to man the way to spiritual freedom."
*Mr. Fumio Sawada
Director
Sophia University, Japan*

THIS MESSAGE IS SPONSORED BY THE FRIENDS OF L. RON HUBBARD.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE A COMPLIMENTARY COPY OF L. RON HUBBARD: A PROFILE WRITE OR CALL:
L. RON HUBBARD PERSONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE, SAINT HILL MANOR, EAST GRINSTEAD, WEST SUSSEX RH19 4JY; PHONE: 01342 326 711.
You can also check the following Internet sites, available in five languages: <http://www.scientology.org> • <http://www.lronhubbard.org> • <http://www.dianetics.org> • emailinfo@scientology.org.

Queen marks 65 years of Christmas messages

Alan Hamilton on a tradition that was launched on a collapsing chair

ON Christmas Day in 1932, a rather grumpy King George V left the family dinner table at Sandringham and went into a below-stairs office to deliver the first royal Christmas broadcast.

Apart from the chair collapsing under him as he sat down, it went well. The two microphones and red cue light were hidden in cabinets of Australian wainscot and the table was covered with a heavy cloth to dampen the echo. Twenty million people heard the King's brief message of cheer, all of 250 words.

"Through one of the marvels of modern science," the King intoned, "I am enabled, this Christmas Day, to speak to all my peoples throughout the Empire. I take it as a good omen that wireless should have reached its present perfection at a time when the Empire has been linked in closer union."

That the world could hear the King-Emperor live was regarded as a technical marvel, and the harbinger of even more astonishing things to come. The *Observer* newspaper, with rare perspicacity, commented: "The time is not far distant when it will be possible for the remotest exile not only to hear the voice of the King, but to see His Majesty in the act of utterance."

That time, it transpired, was



George V made the first Christmas broadcast and George VI continued to do so through the war years

a mere quarter-century distant. Christmas radio broadcasts had continued through the war, and King George VI's addresses to his embattled people had been a source of inspiration. Then in 1954 the BBC approached the freshly crowned Queen Elizabeth II with the suggestion that she give her Christmas message on television. She demurred, saying the time for such innovation had not yet arrived. She relented in 1957, having earlier that year spoken directly to camera during a tour of Canada, a royal innovation that was particularly well received. It was also the 25th anniversary of George V's first wireless address.

Antony Craxton, a veteran BBC producer who had been a



schoolmate of Prince Philip at Gordonstoun, was despatched to Sandringham on Christmas Day, as were an army of BBC and Post Office engineers and linemen. The Queen, unused to addressing her subjects live on camera, was very nervous, but was coached in calm by her husband, who had made a number of live studio appearances.

By today's standards, it was a stilted performance, the script as stiff as the set. "My own family often gather round to watch television, as they are at this moment, and that is how I imagine you now," the Queen said.

"I very much hope that this new medium will make my Christmas message more personal and direct. It is inevitable

that I should seem a rather remote figure to many of you — a monarch to the kings and queens of history, someone whose face may be familiar in newspapers and films but who nevertheless touches your personal lives. But now, at least for a few minutes, I welcome you to the peace of my own home."

The broadcast went down a storm, at home and abroad. British newspapers spoke of "a calm, relaxed, assured young woman speaking with an easy friendliness." American newspapers printed the text in full.

Live transmission was quickly abandoned. Half the Commonwealth was receiving it in the middle of night, besides, it interrupted family dinner at Sandringham. The message has been pre-recorded every year since 1959.

Like *The Morecambe and Wise Christmas Show*, the Queen's broadcast became part of the fabric of Christmas tradition. But not any more. The BBC calculated the number of viewers for the 1985 broadcast to be 17.4 million. By 1993 it had slipped marginally to 16.3 million. Recently there has been a sharper decline: last year's official viewing figure was a mere 11 million, rather less than the audience for the special Christmas edition, later in the day, of *Only Fools and Horses*.



This cartoon by Alasdair Hillery was commissioned by the Princess Royal for the Queen's golden wedding anniversary, which was celebrated last month

Record viewers expected this year

AFTER years of declining interest at home, the Queen's traditional Christmas broadcast is likely to attract its biggest audience this year, with television companies around the world scrambling to screen it in full.

Demand for the programme has been stimulated by the death of Diana, Princess of Wales: broadcasters are hoping the Queen will refer to her former daughter-in-law. Buckingham Palace resolutely refused to disclose the content of the Queen's message yesterday.

It will not, as some expected, be live from Sandringham. The Queen recorded it at Windsor earlier this week and copies are already on their way to remote parts of the Commonwealth.

The programme will be broadcast on all major British television and radio networks at 3pm. It will be offered for simultaneous transmission around the world by major television networks, including CNN, Reuters and Associated Press, who in the past have taken only brief news clips. It will also be shown on British Airways long-haul flights leaving from Heathrow and Gatwick airports and will be available on the Internet on both the Buckingham Palace Website — www.royal.gov.uk — and the ITN website — www.itn.co.uk. The broadcast is being produced by ITN for the first time.

War museum in the firing line

By Russell Jenkins

A £40 MILLION project to build an Imperial War Museum for the North was thrown into doubt yesterday when the Heritage Lottery Fund rejected an application for the bulk of the funding.

The museum, to be built alongside the new Lowry Centre on industrial wasteland beside the Manchester Ship Canal in Trafford, was expected to house Britain's weapons and war art.

The futuristic design, produced by the Polish-American architect Daniel Libeskind, had already provoked controversy. The building, which took the form of three giant shards, symbolised battles on land, sea and air. The 6,000 sq ft building was said to resemble a "broken globe shattered by the wars of the early 20th century". Much of the weaponry and archive material due to go on display has never been on public view. Its supporters believe the

scheme would attract 400,000 visitors a year, but the lottery fund trustees say the project does not fit in with their policy of "doing more for less".

The Imperial War Museum had asked for £22 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund. It has already attracted £8.6 million from the local European Regional Development Fund. The museum's supporters were shocked by the rejection and immediately appealed to Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary.

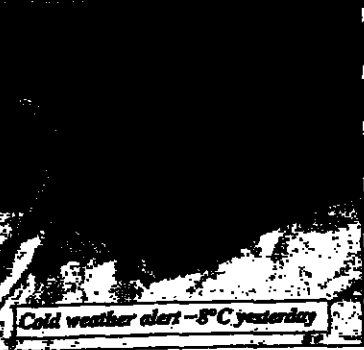
The trustees said the amount of money for such projects had been cut back since the setting up of the sixth "good cause", the New Opportunities Fund.

They also took the view that the Manchester Museum of Science and Technology, the City Art Gallery and the Manchester Museum have already benefited substantially from a joint £36 million lottery funding pledge.

Bulgaria in Crisis

When it rains, it pours

LEFT TO FREEZE
Yordan, 15, already malnourished could die from cold and hunger this winter unless aid reaches him now. His parents, planning Yordan's school clothing and no shoes offer him little protection from the bitter cold and there is no money to heat his orphanage. There are 37,000 places in Bulgaria's orphanages.



No Money To Feed The Children No Money To Heat The Orphanages

Bulgaria is a country in the midst of a serious economic crisis. Now thousands of children are suffering terribly as Siberian temperatures hit the country. Urgent help is needed.

There is little money to heat the orphanages. Orphanage Directors are having to beg for food from local villages and purely know where the next meal is coming from. In some areas children, like Yordan, are going hungry and the cold could prove fatal for many children this winter. Without aid this could be catastrophic for Bulgaria's orphanage children.

The European Children's Trust, sister charity of The Romanian Orphanage Trust, is ready to distribute emergency food packs, clothes and fuel to the orphanages in most need.

Your gift today will save lives and bring hope.

£5.25 could buy enough emergency food for 10 orphanage children for 3 days.

Please send whatever you can to help children survive the winter or call 01273 299599 NOW

I enclose £_____ to save Bulgarian orphanage children. Cheques to The European Children's Trust. Or debit my Access/Visa/CAP card

Card no _____ Expiry date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Name (Mr/Ms) _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Telephone no _____

Return to: European Children's Trust, PO Box 107, Farnham, Surrey, GU10 2AA, UK

Appeal, The European Children's Trust, PO Box 107, Farnham, Surrey, GU10 2AA, UK

01273 299599 NOW. Registered Charity No. 1048257

Please act NOW - winter is here

— Moët & Chandon. Turning nature into art —

Harman enrages disability group at talks on cuts

BY JILL SHERMAN AND PHILIP WEBSTER

DISABILITY campaigners were furious yesterday at Harriet Harman's failure to offer them any assurance that benefits for the sick and disabled would not be cut.

During a meeting with the all-party disability group led by Lord Ashley of Stoke, Ms Harman, the Social Security Secretary, promised better consultation on future changes. But she would not rule out cuts, taxation or means testing for any of the six disability benefits that now cost the Exchequer £24 billion a year. She also raised the possibility of money being given to local councils to hand out as they thought necessary rather than her department paying benefit to individual claimants.

After the hour-long meeting, Lord Ashley, a former Labour minister, expressed his disappointment and frustration. "Disabled people will have a miserable Christmas," he said. "I've had lots of letters from people who are worried, frightened and anxious and hardly dare turn on the television in case they hear about further cutbacks."

He said that he would continue to demand a categorical undertaking from Ms

Harman that there would be no cuts. "We said we supported the review of the Welfare to Work programme on condition that there were no cuts in individual welfare or disability benefits," Harman said.

Ms Harman later suggested that existing claimants would be protected but that new claimants could find benefits reduced, or even abolished. "We cannot say we will continue with the status quo. We would only do that if we thought the system was working well and it isn't."

Lord Ashley said that Ms Harman had agreed to meet the group again in January but he complained that she had failed to give straight answers to any of the questions put forward.

Members of the group, which included Lord Rix, chairman of Mencap, and the Tory MPs Angela Browning and Peter Bottomley, asked Ms Harman what the remit of the review was and if it had been specifically set up to save money. She said to have skirted round the subject, merely saying the point was to provide opportunities for people to find work, while

protecting those who could not.

Yesterday's meeting came after the Cabinet held another lengthy debate about what its members accept is the most sensitive problem facing the Government this Parliament. Although Mr Blair's determination to push through reform was endorsed, ministers agreed that the Government must explain its intentions better than it had over the cuts in benefits for single parents.

It was agreed that a Green Paper setting out changes to the welfare state would be published in February. There was also said to be agreement with John Prescott's remark that it should establish a "consensus for change".

Ministers deeply regret that the first test of their resolve to carry out radical change came on a Tory-imposed cut. But they believe that it could help to prepare the party for comprehensive reform based on getting people into work.

Mr Blair told the Cabinet that the social security budget amounted to more than the total spent on health, education and defence. He said: "We have to get the welfare state back to the principles on which it was founded, which is



Lord Ashley after meeting Harriet Harman yesterday

underlining the importance of work, helping those who are in need." He added that people would support what the Government was seeking to do once the facts were presented.

Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, said that the Government would rightly be judged on whether it mounted a successful attack on poverty. He told colleagues: "We have got to get the facts out about how the welfare state is not helping those most in need."

Mr Blair's spokesman refused to discuss whether individual benefits such as child benefit or disability and sickness allowances would be affected. But he said that the Government could not get into a position where it had to defend every benefit to every person, and he highlighted increasing reports of people on sickness and disability allowances who should not be claiming it. He insisted that the premise of the review was not to introduce "Tory" cuts. It was to alleviate poverty.

Tories prefer Blair to Hague

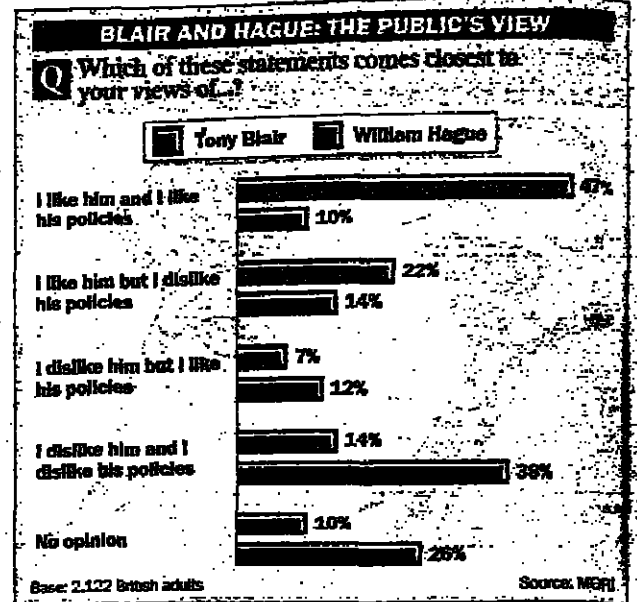
BY PETER RIDDELL

MORE Tory supporters like Tony Blair than like William Hague, their own leader, according to the latest MORI poll for *The Times*.

The poll, undertaken last weekend, underlines the sharp contrast in popularity between the two leaders. Mr Hague has a serious problem in establishing his identity and personality with the voters.

In June, just after he was elected Tory leader, three fifths of the public did not have a view either way about him. This has now fallen to a quarter. The bad news for him is that most of the previous don't knows have shifted to not liking him. While the proportion liking him has risen from 18 to 24 per cent since June, the number disliking him has jumped from 20 to 50 per cent. The swing against him has been even across the social and age spectrum. Unusually for a Tory leader, he is almost as unpopular among those aged over 55 as among 18 to 24-year-olds.

Mr Hague has the further problem that he is also disliked by many Tory supporters. Those saying that they would vote Tory on balance dislike rather than like Mr Hague by 42 to 39 per cent. However, these Tories like Mr Blair by a 51 to 42 per cent



margin. This ties in with the monthly approval ratings. Dissatisfaction with the way that Mr Hague is doing his job as Conservative leader is as high among Tory supporters as among the public as a whole.

There has also been a doubling since June in the proportion disliking Mr Hague's policies to 52 per cent, while the number liking his policies has risen from 14 to just 22 per cent.

Before the election, the public disliked Tory policies even more than now, though, on balance, they liked John Major. He was roughly twice as popular as his successor. By contrast, Mr Blair has become even more liked by the public during the course of this year. Last January, he was liked rather than disliked by 53 to 35 per cent. This has increased to a 69 to 21 per cent margin. The proportion liking rather than disliking his policies has risen from a net

balance of plus 8 to plus 18 points.

Admittedly, Mr Blair's net approval rating — measuring those satisfied minus those dissatisfied with his performance — has fallen from plus 50 to plus 34 points since late November. Among Labour supporters, his net rating has dipped from plus 80 to plus 73 points. But these ratings are still higher than Mr Major ever enjoyed and higher even than the post-Falklands peak of Margaret Thatcher.

The MORI economic optimism index — measuring those thinking that the general economic condition of the country will improve over the next 12 months — is now minus 4 points. This compares with plus 6 points in late November and is the lowest rating since last December.

□ MORI interviewed a representative quota sample of 2,122 adults from December 12 to 15.

New Labour's honeymoon is still going strong

ONE of the most frequent, and silliest, political comments of the autumn has been that the Blair Government's honeymoon is over, or is about to end. This has been forecast every time the Government has hit a problem, whether the Bernie Ecclestone affair or the row over single-parent benefits. But it has not happened.

The ratings of both Tony Blair and Labour remain at near record levels. Even the sharp drop this month in satisfaction with Mr Blair and the Government only removes some of the shine from the post-election gloss and still leaves their ratings well above the levels of the Thatcher and Major years. At the same time, Labour's two-to-one lead over the Tories has hardly narrowed yet.

Two related factors are at work. First, the vast majority of the public believes that the Government still deserves the benefit of the doubt. Having taken the decisive step of changing the party in office on May 1, voters want to give Labour a chance to prove itself. While people are not starry-eyed about what the Government — any government can do — and about what is likely to happen to taxes, they agree with its broad aims and what it has done so far.

Secondly, the public remains disillusioned with the Tories. The voters' verdict on May 1 was not just a rejection of John Major, whom the public rather liked personally. It was more fundamental, about the divided state of the Tory party. Just as Labour lost the confidence of the public in the early 1980s, so have the Tories now. That is reflected in a series of indicators — party image, where the Tories are now behind not only Labour but also the Liberal Democrats.

The poor results of both the Winchester and Beckenham by-elections (where the party retained only three fifths of its May 1 vote) and William Hague's abysmal ratings. The public is not yet interested in listening to the Tories, or ready to forgive them for past errors. So even when satisfaction with the Government drops, as this month, voters

are still unwilling to prefer the Tories to Labour.

The Blair team will regard these trends as a vindication for its step-by-step strategy of proving that Labour can be trusted in office after so long in opposition. But that does not mean that awkward decisions on taxes and spending can be postponed indefinitely.

The Government has so far managed to avoid unpopularity by raising spending on popular programmes through a series of hidden and indirect tax increases (on pension funds, the windfall levy on privatised utilities and by raiding the National Lottery). But there is a limit to such easy options. If the comprehensive spending review is to succeed, there will have to be real cuts in some programmes, notably social security, to finance growth elsewhere. These tensions will test the Government's popularity, as will any slowdown in the economy and

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

halt to the steady decline in unemployment.

The sensible Tory response to these poll ratings is to be patient and to think long-term, as Mr Hague is doing with his far-reaching proposals to change party organisation and internal democracy as a first step towards winning back public confidence. By contrast, some Tory spokesmen are making a mistake in making strident attacks on the Government. The public is neither impressed nor convinced. Far better to be measured, which is in tune with the public mood.

Nonetheless, the Tories do have a problem with Mr Hague. His strong public performances, both at the party conference and often at Prime Minister's Questions, are not getting through to people. After being initially non-committal about him, many voters, including Tory supporters, are now taking a hostile view of his leadership. That will be hard to shift.

PETER RIDDELL

Press register demanded

Parliamentary journalists should have to list their outside interests on a publicly

Currys

FREE

UP TO 500 MINUTES

BT TalkTime®

ON SELECTED PHONES AND ANSWERING MACHINES



BT
Digital Cordless Phone
■ DECT technology for excellent call quality.
■ Liquid crystal display.
■ Call timer facility.
■ 13 number memory.
■ Paging facility.
■ Memory facility.
Model DIVERSE 1010.
Was £179.99.

CURRYS PRICE
£159.99



BT
Cordless Telephone with Built-in Digital Answering Machine
■ Intercom between base and handset.
■ Fully digital answer machine — no need for tapes.
■ 10 number memory.
Model FREESTYLE 1100.
Was £199.99. Was £109.99.



BT
Telephone/Answering Machine
■ Message counter.
■ 15 minute recording time.
Model RESPONSE 110.
Was £199.99. Was £109.99.

10 Offer by redemption only. A credit to the value of the BT minutes claimed will be applied to the next available BT Phone bill for a nominated residential BT Phone Number at the BT Local Weekend Rate.

DIGITAL CORDLESS TELEPHONES
SAVE UP TO £20

BT
Digital Cordless Telephone with Digital Answering Machine
■ DECT technology — for excellent call quality.
■ Digital answer machine — no need for tapes.
■ Call timer facility.
■ 13 number memory.
■ Add up to 5 additional handsets.
■ Liquid crystal display.
Model DIVERSE 1015.
Was £249.99.
CURRYS PRICE
£229.99

HAGENUK Digital Cordless Telephone
■ Reception at speed as a wired phone.
■ Up to 10 number memory.
Model RICHMOND. Was £139.99.
500 MINUTES FREE BT TalkTime®.
CURRYS PRICE
£129.99

PHILIPS Digital Cordless Telephone
■ Intercom facility.
■ 23 number memory.
Model SALIC.
Was £169.99.
CURRYS PRICE
£149.99

CORDLESS PHONES
SAVE UP TO £10

BT
Cordless Telephone
■ 10 number memory.
■ Paging facility between base and handset.
■ Security button.
■ Last number redial.
■ Wall mountable.
Model FREESTYLE 80.
Was £69.99. Was £59.99.
CURRYS PRICE
£59.99

BINATONE Cordless Telephone
■ Intercom facility between base and handset.
■ 9 number memory.
Model FREESTYLE 5.
Was £59.99.
CURRYS PRICE
£49.99

PHILIPS Cordless Telephone
■ 12 number memory.
■ Intercom facility between base and handset.
Model TDS206.
CURRYS PRICE
£69.99

BT Cordless Telephone
■ Intercom facility between base and handset.
■ 10 number memory.
Model FREESTYLE 120.
Was £79.99. 200 MINUTES FREE BT TalkTime®.
CURRYS PRICE
£74.99

BT Cordless Telephone
■ Intercom facility between base and handset.
■ 10 number memory.
Model DUET 500.
100 MINUTES FREE BT TalkTime®.
CURRYS PRICE
£89.99

TELEPHONES
FROM UNDER £8

SAISHO
■ Last number redial.
■ Call timer facility.
Model T11.
CURRYS PRICE
£7.99

BT Telephone
■ 13 number memory.
■ Security button.
■ Recall button.
■ Wall mountable.
Model DUET 450.
CURRYS PRICE
£14.99

ASTRAL Telephone
■ Available in Cream or Green.
■ Mechanical bell rings.
Model KNIGHTSBRIDGE.
CURRYS PRICE
£28.99

ANSWERING MACHINES
FROM UNDER £25

BETACOM Answering Machine
■ Remote access facility.
Model SOLD PLUS.
Was £24.99.
CURRYS PRICE
£24.99

MATSUI Telephone/Answering Machine
■ Remote access facility.
■ Memory recording facility.
Model TDS206.
CURRYS PRICE
£39.99

BT Answering Machine
■ Remote access facility.
■ Message indicator.
■ 15 minute recording time.
Model RESPONSE 5.
CURRYS PRICE
£29.99

BT Digital Answering Machine
■ Fully digital — no need for tapes.
■ Message time/date stamp.
■ Remote access facility.
■ 15 minute recording time.
Model RESPONSE 60.
CURRYS PRICE
£44.99

only
TRUST BRITAIN'S LEADING ELECTRICAL STORE
TO OFFER THE FRIENDLY HELP AND ADVICE
YOU NEED WHEN CHOOSING A MOBILE
BIGGER CHOICE
We offer all the major networks and latest handsets.

Currys

Doctors are
Traitor
tried su
widow r

Deliver
Christn

0800 731 0

Doctors urge caution as Yeltsin announces return to Kremlin



Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Prime Minister, visiting President Yeltsin at the clinic yesterday

PRESIDENT YELTSIN'S doctors yesterday cautioned him to stay in hospital a little longer after he announced that he was feeling better and would be back at work in the Kremlin today.

The initial announcement by Mr Yeltsin was a blow for his detractors, who have been hinting that it is time Russia had a leader whose health could be relied upon.

After an eight-day absence from public view, when doctors confined him to the Barvikha sanatorium outside Moscow to recover from a bad cold, the Russian leader looked and sounded much better.

"I am ending my stay here," said Mr Yeltsin. "Tomorrow I return to work and from the new year I will be back to a full-scale schedule," he added, admonishing journalists for

Richard Beeston sees a bullish President confound claims that he is too ill to rule

reporting that his absence was due to a recurring heart ailment.

"Everything is all right with me. My illness is not related to any heart problems. It was indeed a cold and there had been a danger of complications," he said.

Barely five hours later, a presidential spokesman said that Mr Yeltsin "could remain hospitalised on the advice of his doctors".

Coming so soon after the President's bullish comments, however, the Kremlin spokesman explained that Mr Yeltsin had simply been "expressing his desire" to resume work. "The issue [of his departure] is

currently being studied. His stay at the clinic could be extended, on medical advice, maybe by a day, maybe more," the official added.

Although the holiday season is normally a quiet period in Russian politics, Mr Yeltsin may find himself back at the centre of a battle with the opposition-dominated parliament, which has taken advantage of the Kremlin leader's absence to score points against the Government.

Yesterday deputies in the Duma, the lower house of parliament, passed a motion condemning Mr Yeltsin's unexpected offer in Stockholm to cut the number of nuclear

warheads by a one third and to slash conventional forces in the northwest region by 40 per cent.

The motion described the offers as "irresponsible and misplaced" and "inconsistent with Russia's laws".

The language of the motion suggested that the Duma was in no mood to ratify Russia's Start 2 agreement with America to reduce strategic nuclear weapons, a move President Clinton has said he wants completed before he visits Russia next year.

Of more pressing concern to the Kremlin leader is the fate of next year's budget which past its first reading thanks to his intervention. However, the Duma has postponed the second reading until Wednesday and it now seems unlikely it will be ready before the end of the year.

"We must have a confirmed budget in the new year," said Mr Yeltsin. Air chief sacked: Mr Yeltsin yesterday dismissed General Viktor Prudnikov, the chief of Russia's air defence forces, the President's press service reported.

No explanation was given for the decree dismissing the 58-year-old general. However, the move was widely seen as part of the planned merger of Russia's air force and air defence forces into a single force in 1998.

Late last year, General Prudnikov was named chief of military co-operation headquarters of the Commonwealth of Independent States, a loose alliance that replaced the former Soviet Union. The general will apparently continue to hold that post. (AP)

Traitor Philby tried suicide, widow reveals

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

KIM PHILBY, the Soviet double agent who betrayed Britain during the Cold War, tried to take his own life soon after defecting to Moscow in the 1960s, according to a book written by his widow.

Nearly a decade after Britain's most famous traitor died and was buried with full KGB honours in Moscow, Rufina Philby, the spy's fourth wife, said that she had written about their life together to rehabilitate his battered reputation.

Philby is despised to this day by the British intelligence community for decades of treachery which led to the deaths of scores of agents and the compromising of clandestine operations and the best kept secrets of the West. However, his widow cast him in a different light. "I spent the best part of 20 years with him and I wanted to write about the real man, not the figure of legend, but the intelligent, kind and very ordinary person he was," she said at the launch of her book, *I Went My Own Way*.

"Literally from the first day we met I forgot that he was an intelligence agent and his worldwide reputation," she said, speaking with genuine devotion. "He was a marvelous man. I never met another like him."

Although the book, the latest of dozens written about the most famous double agent this century, does not expose any new espionage sensations, it does go some way to explaining how a senior member of the British establishment had to adapt to an alien existence in Soviet Russia. Mrs Philby

said that her husband appreciated the country because of his love of Russian culture and literature and his knowledge about the country's history, despite the fact that his spoken Russian was never fluent.

The book is accompanied by photographs of Philby seen fishing, picnicking and touring across the Soviet Union and its East Bloc satellite states, including Bulgaria and Cuba.

It is also clear that he did not fit into Soviet society, was treated with suspicion by the KGB, where some feared he was a triple agent, and missed his life in Britain. The book reveals that it was not until

6 He missed little luxuries such as whisky and coarse-cut Oxford marmalade

1977, 14 years after his arrival in Russia, that he was invited to visit the infamous headquarters of the Soviet secret police at Lubyanka Square.

"He could not forget his homeland," said Mrs Philby, commenting on the spy's well-known love for whisky and *The Times* cricket reports. She was also reminded by former KGB agents present at the book launch how little luxuries, like "coarse cut Oxford marmalade" and other delicacies unavailable in Russia, were routinely sent back to Philby's home in Moscow from agents based in London.

Nevertheless, she insisted that he never wanted to return home and that he realised that

the country he had left had probably changed beyond all recognition.

Philby never openly displayed any doubts about his decision to betray his country, nor his apparently unshakable faith in communism. This was acquired during his undergraduate years at Cambridge in the 1930s and reinforced during the Spanish Civil War, when he was a correspondent for *The Times*, while also beginning his spying career for the Soviet Union.

However, the new book does for the first time reveal how, soon after his defection, he had attempted suicide.

"Then in the 1960s he tried without success to take his own life, by slashing his veins," wrote his widow. "Once by accident I detected deep scars on his left wrist and I instinctively pulled back." She asked him what had happened, but Philby just took a sip of whisky and, in an unusual voice, replied: "We Communists must endure, be strong and never give in to weakness."

Despite the shaky start in Russia, Philby did gradually settle into life in his adopted homeland, where he was given a comfortable but modest flat near Pushkin Square in central Moscow. The KGB used him to brief new agents being sent to London and his analysis of the British establishment was always highly valued by Soviet Intelligence.

Mrs Philby said that her husband was broadly in favour of the changes undertaken by Mikhail Gorbachev to reform the Soviet system in the perestroika years, but she



Rufina Philby signs a book about her life with a spy at its launch in Moscow. "I write about the real man, not the figure of legend," she said

was certain that he would not have approved of the chaos and poverty of modern Russia under President Yeltsin's rule.

Three years ago she raised £150,000 by auctioning books and memorabilia at Sotheby's in London, when her widow's pension dropped to the equivalent of about £3 a month. "It was very hard for me to part with those objects, but I could not survive any other way," she said.

Despite the sale of some

items, her husband's study today remains exactly the way it was when he died. Amid the books are two of his most cherished possessions: a picture of Che Guevara and another of the Hotel Normandie, his favourite bar in Beirut, from where he defected on a Soviet ship in 1963. The book may reveal more about Philby, but leaves open the mystery of why he betrayed his country. It will not be the last word on his life.

Antigua charges Welsh islander with murder bid

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN MIAMI

A WELSHMAN, Cyril "Taffy" Bufton, caretaker of Guiana Island, off Antigua's coast in the eastern Caribbean, has been charged with attempted murder after a shooting incident involving the brother of the country's leading politician.

Mr Bufton, 73, from Brecon, Powys, is accused of shooting his lawyer, Vere Bird Jr, the brother of Antigua's Prime Minister, Lester Bird, after an argument in his legal chambers on Tuesday. Mr Bird Jr had been representing Mr Bufton in a long-running dispute with the Government over its efforts to evict him and his wife, Sonny Bufton, from the island which has been their home for 32 years.

Mr Bird Jr, 61, remained in hospital yesterday with a bullet lodged in his throat. In a statement issued from his hospital bed in St John's, the Antigua capital, he accused Mr Bufton of shooting him. He said: "Bufton was very depressed and desolate. He reached into his pocket and pulled a gun and shot me."

The altercation occurred soon after the Antigua and Barbuda parliament passed a Bill to evict the Buftons from Guiana to make way for a \$300 million (£184 million) tourist resort proposed by a Malaysian investor. Work on the project is to begin next month.

Friends of Mr Bufton say the circumstances of the shooting remain unclear. "I don't think Taffy went there to kill him," Winston Derrick, editor of *The Daily Observer*, said.

"Maybe he pulled out the gun in frustration and it went off accidentally in a struggle."

The Buftons, who grew up in Brecon, moved to Guiana in the 1950s to manage the island for its owner, Alexander Hamilton-Hill, a British lawyer. At one time they supervised 120 cotton pickers.

In its heyday, the island attracted nobility, including Princess Margaret and the Earl of Snowdon who visited during their honeymoon in 1961. On the death of their benefactor, the estate was sold but the Buftons clung to a five-acre property where they lived in a ramshackle building, relied on rain for water and car batteries to power electricity. They had no telephone.

Supporters of the Buftons, who have nurtured the wildlife on the island, especially the fallow deer, are critical of the "Asian Village" resort deal. They say it represents a "giveaway" of Antigua land.

The Prime Minister says the project is necessary to bring jobs to Antigua. With 2,000 hotel rooms eventually planned, the Asian Village promises to be one of the largest developments in the Eastern Caribbean. The developer, Tan Kay Hock, hopes to build a "playground of the rich and famous". The island will house six resorts, a 40,000 sq ft casino and beachfront rooms offering guests "your own private piece of ocean". Environmentalists say the project will endanger wildlife, including the West Indies whistling duck and the tropical mockingbird.

LEARN HOW TO BEAT THE MARKET WITH PIERCE FROSTMAN'S "TOMORROW NEVER DIES"

★★★★★

"BRILLIANT."

Cancel everything else."

Mariella Frostman - NEWS OF THE WORLD

"Slicker, faster and funnier than any recent Hollywood product."

Nigel Kendall TIME OUT

"Pierce Brosnan is perfect... cracking sexual energy."

Ryan Gilbey THE INDEPENDENT

TOMORROW NEVER DIES

NOW SHOWING AT CINEMAS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Delivered to your home in time for Christmas.

SYSTEMS START FROM
£669 INC VAT

51 SHOWROOMS
NATIONWIDE

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL FREEPHONE
0800 731 9372

CINNY

THE BIGGEST PC MANUFACTURER IN THE HIGH STREET

COMPANY INFORMATION: CINNY, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.



Children who were freed by the gunman after their ordeal at the Rigsbee Child Development Centre holding hands as they are escorted yesterday to an elementary school to receive counselling by chaplains and social workers

Gunman holds two sons hostage in Dallas siege

More child and adult hostages have been freed as the standoff enters its second day, Giles Whittell writes

A WEALTHY Dallas suburb was reeling from shock yesterday after a gunman took 61 children and six adults hostage in a day-care centre. As the incident entered a second day, the two captives remaining were the gunman's son and stepson.

The gunman, identified as James Monroe Lipscomb, released most of the hostages in groups of up to 20 as police lay siege to the day-care centre in Plano on Wednesday afternoon. Friends concluded that he had "flipped" because of marital problems.

Elite tactical units arrived from Dallas yesterday to replace exhausted police who had manned a cordon round the Rigsbee Child Development Centre throughout Wednesday night. Bruce Glasscock, Plano police chief, said: "We are in for a long haul. We will be here as long as there is any chance of bringing out any more of the hostages."

The incident began soon after 3pm on Wednesday when a gunman botched a robbery attempt at a cash dispensing machine outside a branch of the Plano Bank and Trust near the day-care centre, 20 miles north of Dallas. He then ran into the centre brandishing a handgun.

"We were hiding in the closet from him," said Kelli Burden, nine, after her release. "When he entered he was yelling cuss-words at us."

Among those able to flee Mr Lipscomb's hostage-taking was his estranged wife, Kristen Shaw. She worked at the centre and had words with him there in recent weeks, one of her colleagues said.

Most of the hostages, including dozens of toddlers were freed in groups of be-

tween ten and 20 during the afternoon and night. Distraught parents rushed to the centre on hearing of the incident and prayed in groups during the tense hours between developments. One woman was shown on local television breaking down uncontrollably when told her child was being held captive.

As helicopters from police SWAT teams and local news stations hovered over the centre, parents and children who were reunited were offered counselling by chaplains and social workers at a nearby elementary school.

Some children emerged red-eyed from crying, but none appeared to have been injured; some seemed unaware of the danger, having been allowed to watch videos. "He

said he was not going to harm anyone," said Kelli. One child's first words to his mother were: "Mum, I am hungry." Police negotiators set up a hot-line to Mr Lipscomb and kept him talking through the night, but it was unclear yesterday what, if any, demands he had made. Though officials refused to confirm his name, Mr Lipscomb was identified as the suspect by friends and family.

His nephew, Terrance Shaw, 15, related a recent conversation in which his uncle gave a warning that "a moment of madness can lead to a lifetime of sadness. You get mad at somebody and you go out there and shoot them. Right now, he is not in his right mind," the teenager said. Others who knew Mr

Lipscomb as a reasonable man were equally baffled. "I don't know what made him flip," said Oretta Griggs, a friend of his wife. "This is out of character. He's a kind person."

Briana Stanberry, a former neighbour, said: "I don't know why he would do anything like this. He has never done anything like it before."

Mr Lipscomb, 33, who owns his own janitorial business, moved out of a house he shared with his immediate family and up to nine others last month after a row with his wife. Friends said the couple were planning to divorce.

His two children, Xavier, 8, his stepson, and Monroe, 4, still being held captive, had been with their mother at the day care centre. They had tried to leave as the others were being freed, witnesses said.

But their father stopped them, yelling, "Get back here,



Trish Martinez embraces her three-year-old grandson, Mark, after he was released

get back here". The six adults taken hostage were released early in the siege, a fourth shortly before midnight and two more at 4am yesterday.

Ron Thompson, a father waiting for news of his child on Wednesday evening, said: "This guy's deranged. If I could exchange my life for the kids, I would do it."

The siege, without bloodshed so far, is the latest in a series of similar actions by distressed men who endanger the lives of innocents because of personal grudges. In 1991, 30 people were held hostage by four Thai gunmen in a California electronic store. In the same city, Sacramento, a single gunman held up 60

people in an eight-and-a-half hour siege at a high school the following year.

In 1988, James Harvey, a heavily armed fanatic protesting about the plight of the homeless in the United States, kidnapped 26 youngsters at a junior school in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. That siege ended without injury.

British stars dominate Golden Globes

KATE WINSLET. Helena Bonham Carter and Dame Judi Dench dominated the nominations for Best Actress in this year's Golden Globe awards, selected by the frequently-criticised Hollywood Foreign Press Association and traditionally a guide to the year's Oscar winners.

Winslet's nomination was one of eight for James Cameron's three-hour epic, *Titanic*, which was also nominated for Best Dramatic Film, Best Actor and Best Director. *Titanic*'s rivals for Best Dramatic Film are Steven Spielberg's *Amistad*, *The Boxer*, starring Daniel Day-Lewis, *Good Will Hunting* and *LA*

Confidential. Nominees for the year's Best Comedy or Musical include *As Good as It Gets*, which stars Jack Nicholson in his most acclaimed role in years, *My Best Friend's Wedding*, *Wag the Dog*, and *Men in Black*.

The Best Actress category also includes Jody Foster and Jessica Lange for their roles in *Contact* and *A Thousand Acres* respectively. Ms Bonham Carter is thought to be a favourite for the prize, having won two Best Actress awards so far from the Los Angeles and New York Film Critics Associations.

Kate Winslet's co-star in *Titanic*,

Leonardo Di Caprio, won a nomination for Best Actor, as did Daniel Day-Lewis, who plays an Irish pugilist in *The Boxer*. Djimon Hounsou, the slaves' leader in *Amistad*, Peter Fonda in an acclaimed comeback role in *Ulee's Gold*, and Matt Damon, Hollywood's latest matinee idol and the star of *Good Will Hunting*.

The Golden Globes will be presented in a ceremony televised live on January 18. Even though they are voted on by just 90 film reporters, only 60 per cent of whom are full-time journalists, the Golden Globes have won increasing clout with the studios.



Winslet: one of the eight nominations for *Titanic*

New curbs for Net data firms

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

INTERNET data companies have hurriedly signed up to voluntary curbs on distributing personal information in a bid to head off new privacy laws by the Clinton Administration.

The move by 14 companies comes as a new report on Internet fraud revealed that the FBI had found cases of illegal access to computer

information or abuse of it had risen six-fold in the past five years. In September, a Maryland couple pleaded guilty to stealing the "identity" of hundreds of people by collecting their personal details off the Internet.

In the United States, three items of information — social security number, date of birth and mother's maiden name — are used in most everyday circumstances to establish a person's identity, allowing

someone to get access to a bank account or credit rating, to set up telephone or electricity accounts and to apply for a driver's licence or credit cards.

The agreement to restrict access does not apply to information generally available in public records, such as court documents and marriage papers. All private information will still be available to law-enforcement agencies and some of it to law firms, banks and other businesses.

Orange understand people like to

talkback is a perfect way to give

an Orange phone as a gift, without

tying someone to unwanted pay-

ments. £149.99 includes a Motorola

mr36 phone, connection to Orange

and 15 minutes of national calls

each month for a whole year. Plus

Orange Care for one year worth £50,

including 12 months free insurance.

For more information call Orange

direct on 0800 86 10 80 or visit

www.orange.co.uk

هكذا من الأهل

How Europe sees Britain: Sieg for Blair or shut up

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

TONY BLAIR has promised to bring Europe closer to the people when Britain takes the presidency of the European Union next month, but the Government's message of "greater transparency" risks backfiring, thanks to the heavy-handed tactics of its media managers.

For six months, continental journalists have been both amused and irritated by the combative antics with which the Government's new Labour spokesmen try to limit information and keep the foreign media "on message". However, a knock-about performance by the spin doctors at last week's Luxembourg summit is causing the continental media and EU officials to wonder about the Government's ability to handle the task of supplying neutral information during the presidency.

Some officials at the Council of Ministers in Brussels are also worried that the Government may be trying to gag EU spokesmen, although this is denied by the Foreign Office. "They don't seem to understand that we have to give more than just the British version of events here," said an EU official.

The chief culprit, in the eyes of continental journalists as well as British officials, is Alastair Campbell, the Prime Minister's pugnacious press spokesman. A former tabloid journalist, Mr Campbell treats his Euro-outings like forays into hostile territory and takes an apparent pride in his unfamiliarity with the subject. "You could say the rudeness didn't matter if the guy gave wonderful information, but he actually doesn't know anything," said a continental EU correspondent.

Next in line is Charlie Whelan, the spokesman for Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, a man who likes to dismiss EU issues as "Euro-bollocks" and tells journalists he would not deign to bring his briefings from the closed council sessions to the ministers themselves. Mr Whelan earned Brussels fame in an incident last month in which he landed a punch on the *Financial Times* man in the Council.

The gladiatorial and flippant conduct of Messrs Campbell and Whelan may hail from the rough and tumble of the British lobby

tradition but the manner does not translate into the more delicate context of the EU. "The bolshy-boy tactics don't travel well," noted a BBC correspondent. Questions from non-Britons, especially in poor English, are often dismissed with something approaching contempt. Spanish reporters rebelled after one exchange in which Mr Campbell, who holds a Cambridge language degree, said he did not understand their questions, in English, and refused to answer their inquiries. "He laughed at us. It was very surprising," said Carlos Segovia, correspondent for *El Mundo*.

Summing up the British spin doctors at the Luxembourg summit, Pierre Bovey, the Europe correspondent for *Le Figaro*, said: "If they wanted to be disliked, they could hardly do it in a better way. It's real arrogance."

After one bruising exchange with the British spokesman at Luxembourg, Christian Wernicke, correspondent for *Die Zeit*, said: "They've got used to owning their country. They've started to think they own Europe as well."

At the summit, Mr Campbell opened a briefing to several hundred media personnel by attacking British journalists who had "gone native", one of his favourite jibes. When the *American International*

Herald Tribune published his remark the following day, Mr Campbell inquired about the offending reporter: "Who is this?"

At one point in the summit Mr Campbell erroneously reported a victory for Mr Blair in the wrangling for a British seat at the Euro-X finance council when no accord had even been reached. Half an hour later, he retracted his remarks in telephone calls to British broadcasters, but to no one else. These attempts to manipulate EU information prompted a scathing article in *Die Presse* of Vienna this week, which described Mr Campbell as "the tall Briton with rude manners". It also noted that he would probably be flattered by the description. When it came to information, *Die Presse* said, the Government's policy was "Sieg für Blair oder Shut Up" (Victory for Blair or shut up).

After Mr Blair was questioned about his spin doctors' Euro-outings in parliament last Monday, Downing Street said it could not help it "if foreign journalists were offended". The bad image-making is in direct conflict with Mr Blair's desire to win the respect of Europe and impose "British leadership" and is surprising given the Prime Minister's own good handling of the foreign media.

Mr Blair's political entourage is unperturbed with their image, in the knowledge that upsetting foreign journalists is unlikely to be deemed an offence at home. However it is no secret that the Foreign Office, which has enjoyed a good reputation for professionalism in EU business even during the years of conflict with Brussels, is worried about possible damage to the public perception of the British presidency.

London's performance will be judged above all by its handling of preparations for the single currency, a delicate task given Britain's history on the issue. Mr Brown will be chairing decisive sessions of Ecofin, the policy-making council. Some British officials are worried about the potential for trouble, given Mr Brown's own bumpy start in Ecofin and his spokesman's hostile approach to the job of explaining what went on inside the closed council.

Leading article, page 21



6 You could say Campbell's rudeness doesn't matter, but he actually doesn't know anything?



A girl cries during a blood test to check for avian flu at her kindergarten in Hong Kong yesterday. There are nine confirmed cases.

Boy, 2, becomes latest victim of avian flu

FROM JONATHAN MURSKY IN HONG KONG

A BOY aged two yesterday became the ninth confirmed victim of avian flu in Hong Kong, where two people have already died from the disease.

The World Health Organisation sought yesterday to calm international fears of a pandemic with a statement saying that such a danger "is not yet established".

Of the two dead, a small boy in Hong Kong's New Territories is the only person known to have directly contracted the virus, apparently from local chickens. But a

Hong Kong health officer said he was unaware that 1,000 chickens had died in the local Cheung Sha Wan wholesale chicken market on December 12.

The market was reopened yesterday after a three-day cleansing operation at the request of traders, but sales, usually of more than 80,000 chickens a day, were down by 80 per cent, even though prices had been halved.

The public now refuses to eat chicken in restaurants, and Chinese chickens require certificates that they are virus-free. Reports on the gravity of the crisis vary. The Princess Margaret Hospital in

Hong Kong attempted to calm fears here — during a period of even greater than usual air pollution — by noting that not all coughing indicates the flu. The avian virus, it said, is only transmitted at distances of up to 3ft.

But the Princess Margaret is the only hospital here with a 20-bed infectious disease ward, and Dr Andrew Yip, spokesman for the Hong Kong Public Doctors Association, has warned that the number of isolation beds may be inadequate if there is a sudden surge in cases.

Two cousins of a five-year-old girl ill with the avian virus may

have caught it directly from her, but this is not yet certain. The girl attended a nursery school with a playground fouled by chicken feathers and flesh. Some other children in the nursery are reported ill with flu, but it is not known whether it is the virus H5N1, previously confined to birds.

□ Taipei: Taiwan's Council of Agriculture yesterday told customs officers to crack down on the smuggling of chickens from mainland China. The country's Health Department warned tourists going to Hong Kong not to visit poultry markets or bird parks because of avian flu. (AP)

Warring burger giants put chips on front line

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

AMERICA'S largest purveyors of fast food formally declared war on each other yesterday in the Battle of the Favourite Fry.

McDonald's, the world's biggest fast-food chain, has issued combat guidelines to its more than 12,000 restaurants in the US urging a counter-attack against an attempt by Burger King to gain superiority in the American chips market. In a memorandum entitled "Keep Your Eyes on Our Fries", Jack Greenberg, the chairman of McDonald's USA, ordered employees to staff their fry stations all day long,

check the times and temperatures three times daily and remember, above all, to salt their chips properly. "As we prepare to go head-to-head we're operating from a huge strategic advantage because everyone knows that McDonald's has the best fries — bar none," said Mr Greenberg in Churchillian tones. "I don't have to tell you that this is our best opportunity to stop Burger King in its tracks and thwart its strategy of copying us to steal market share."

The counter-offensive by McDonald's reflects the company's growing anxiety over poor American results amid increasingly aggressive competition. Burger King Corp, a wholly owned subsidiary of Britain's Grand Metropol-

itan, first introduced Big King, a Big Mac clone that has proved extremely popular. McDonald's responded with an item identical to Burger King's Whopper.

The real war is about to begin. Burger King last week launched its new-look chips with a \$70 million (£42.7 million) campaign, touting the first Friday in January as national "Free Fry-Day", during which Americans can sample the latest delicacy. "It looks like McDonald's is acknowledging that we are taking over," said Kim Miller, of Burger King. "But I think the the consumer is the real winner in the fast food war." Burger King's US market share is 19.2 per cent, with McDonald's on 41.9 per cent.

immaculate selection

Heavy Gear™ CD ROM The Curse of Monkey Island CD ROM

Wing Commander Prophecy CD ROM StarCraft CD ROM

free £5 voucher
when you spend £10
on games in our store

Call Freephone 0800 205 021 for more information
(excludes some titles) for the delivery direct to your home

MEGASTORES

THE SUNDAY TIMES

CULTURE

DOUBLE CHRISTMAS ISSUE

Don't miss The Sunday Times' special Christmas edition of Culture this weekend — 96 pages packed with previews and critics' choices for two holiday weeks of viewing and listening, with comprehensive listings for radio, television, cable and satellite

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

حكايا من الأدب



The perfect Christmas man is clever, funny and likeable

Book your festive man now

I thought to be a law of nature, so generally it is true, that if ever a woman needed a man it is for those 48 hours from Christmas Eve to Boxing Day when she goes home to her family. Because it does not seem to matter how liberated and feminist a family is, the sight of an unmarried daughter will always get them worried. And a Worried Parent (as I now know, having had children myself) is a terrible thing. On the other hand, bring home a powerful, personable young man (and for these purposes the more powerful the better — the head of the Sicilian Mafia would do very nicely) and you will find that your parents are easing out of your hand. Families are very primitive about these matters, and especially at Christmas when nature abhors a single woman — and so will your parents. As the advertisement for the RSPCA so very nearly said: "A man is for Christmas, not just for life."

My own transformation into a Spinster took place alarmingly early. One minute I was the

A man is for Christmas, not for life, says Rachel Morris. And the more powerful and more personable he is, the better

Daughter-Who-Had-Gone-To-University-And-Was-Doing-Very-Nicely and the next minute (somewhere in my late twenties) they were shaking their heads over my single status.

It didn't help that my brothers were getting married and having children, a change of lifestyle that brought about a delightful improvement in their position. Suddenly they were given the biggest bedrooms, their opinions were taken seriously, cheques were being written discreetly on their behalf and their children were being passed from lap to lap with much murmuring and cooing.

I, meanwhile, was doing the washing up and having to endure heads shaken over my new haircut

(of which I was very fond) and my new boots (bought at great expense). It's not easy being the family spinster, even if I was a fresh-faced 27-year-old.

It is not that my family are monsters. Really, quite the contrary. It is just that, feminists though they are, they do tend to fall into line when there is a man about. And so, in my experience, what every woman needs this Christmas is a man to slay her family with his power, his personality and his appeal. I can still remember the relief with which I felt into the arms of my husband-to-be. It was December, and as soon as I decently could I broached the subject: "Can you save me from Christmas?"

All of which makes me wonder

why no one has ever set up the Christmas Husband Agency. You can picture the scene. You pick him up on Christmas Eve at a pre-arranged time on your way to your parents' house in the country. He's clever, funny and likeable. He talks money with your father, does the washing-up with your mother, plays whist with your grandmother (and allows her to beat him) and computer games with your brother (and beats him hollow).

He declares firmly that he loves your haircut, that he chose your boots himself and you're doing very well in your new job, where you are extremely popular. He drops some broad hints about his power and position which soon has them simpering. There's no problem with conjugal rights of course, because, this being your parents' house, you have separate bedrooms. Your parents love him, although your brother, being more worldly (and still smarting from that computer game) will look at him in a puzzled

way and ask you where you cloned him.

Finally, on Boxing Day, after a suitably late breakfast, he will tell your parents that you really have to go back to London, and, bundling you into the car, will drive you to the nearest motorway service station (it being the only place open) where he will listen patiently while you unload on to him 35 years of fury and outrage. And then, with just a peck on the cheek, he will get up and walk out of your life for ever.

Or not, perhaps. Because, of course, you may decide that a man should be for life, not just for Christmas. In which case all you need to do is smile sheepishly and he will instantly order two more coffees and suggest a film and dinner. "Dream on," say my friends, "dream on." But it seems to me that if we can get a man on the moon (not to mention a divorce settlement for the Spencers) it should be possible for someone to create a Christmas Husband Agency.

'If Mrs Maita weren't so nice, I'd throttle her'

The brains behind Tamagotchi, the virtual cyberpet, is a schoolgirlish slip of a woman. Moira Petty interviews Aki Maita

If I could have a one-to-one with anybody, it wouldn't be John Lennon or James Joyce — it would be whoever invented the blasted cyberpet. I shrieked recently. I must have been pulling on a wishbone, because here I was face to face with the brains behind the Tamagotchi, the original virtual pet.

Mrs Aki Maita, 35, from being some kind of high-tech Professor Brainsworth, is a fragile, schoolgirlish slip of a thing. So it was hard to give her a piece of my mind, especially when my invective had to be channelled through an interpreter.

I tried to tell her that since July our household has been punctuated by beeps and electronic whines and that I have been forced into an unwanted acquaintance with the most intimate physical functions of my daughter's two cyberpets.

By night, her bedroom

sounds like an intensive care ward. By day, she is the assiduous attendant of the little pests, pressing buttons to appease their hunger, mete out discipline or take them to the toilet, the result of which is delightfully illustrated on the liquid crystal screen as steaming triangular piles.

When Lily, 10, first demanded a virtual pet, I was nervous. After all, we have two mice, wet-nosed golden retrievers and six cats. Negotiations took place at Brent Cross shopping centre, North London. The computer-generated creatures exist on another dimension, she told me, she was the only child in the world without one. Then there was a dramatic shower of tears and I was the target of crueler-than-starets by other shoppers.

Hoping she would have tired of its infernal demands by the end of summer, I gave in. A few weeks later her father bought her a second. Now she

is a single mother of two electronic babes — and I must say she is showing uncommon interest in the passage of the Social Services Bill and the welfare of single mums.

I, meanwhile, am the virtual grandmother, left to babysit when she has forgotten to smuggle them into school. When Lily was born, I had read the baby manuals and knew which end was which. The peevish squeals of the electro-beasties was more puzzling. One jab of the button and I sent Roman, named after the lead singer of Boyzone, to a virtual cemetery.

Death, though, was not the drama I had expected. A click of the button, a shuffle through Smash Hits to find a name, and a new pet was hatched. Some children have reportedly been more traumatised. Did that worry Mrs Maita? "It is part of our duty to let children know that some day all creatures die," she replied gravely.

Mrs Maita is not, as has been reported, a housewife who invented the Tamagotchi to satisfy her children's wish for a pet. She has worked for Bandai, the Japanese toy and leisure company, for seven years, as part of the prosaically-titled Planning Section, Toy Entertainment Division, Department 1.

"I look at the market. What is the trend? What do people want?" says Mrs Maita. "It has been pet boom in Japan. Traditionally we have cats and dogs. But in pet boom we get alternative pets, fish, marmosets, ferrets."

"As the households are small and many people are allergic to pets, I thought we could adapt the idea as a toy. After pet boom we have another boom in portable goods. You open any handbag and you will find telephone, pager, GameBoy or even smaller TV or radio."

There was a moral component, too. "I thought it would be great to teach children the pleasure of caring. The more you care for it, the better the animal you see on the screen."

And what about the cross parents who will say that cyberpets 'disturb' bedtime, meals, homework and have been banned by many schools? Well, said Mrs Maita, all Tamagotchis have a pause button.

A jab of the button and I sent Roman to a virtual cemetery

By the end of the year, one million Tamagotchis will have been sold in the UK, 36 million worldwide. The makers claim it is the best-selling toy ever. Bandai has had previous hits, such as Power Rangers, but in the year to March 31, 1997, recorded losses of £40 million.

The company was on the point of merging with the games giant, Sega, until Mrs Maita had her brainwave. Launched in Japan in November 1996, the Tamagotchi craze has reversed Bandai's fortunes.

Did Mrs Maita not regret having gone solo with her idea, which would have made her a yen multimillionaire? "Yes, it was my idea," she said, with a bird-like flutter of her hands. "But I couldn't have invented it without my years of experience with the company." The Bandai GameBoy or even smaller TV or radio.

For every authentic Tamagotchi on sale, there are estimated to be four or five copycat cyberpets. Unlike the Japanese, the British are not brand loyal, says Mrs Maita with some disapproval.

Tamagotchi has become a generic term for the cult but copyright laws here are unable to deal with the problem in the way Bandai would like. The original was devised over a two-year period, in a Far Eastern factory, it can be taken apart and copied overnight.

Brands such as the controversial Kimiko, which features a foster child, have been wrongly linked to Tamagotchi. But children themselves are capable of subverting the idea. In Japan,

boys have vied to kill off their pet as quickly as possible by overdoing the snack and discipline buttons.

In Hong Kong, a Triad virtual pet existed on a diet of cigarettes and alcohol, and was rewarded with knives, before the authorities there banned it. "With toys, there is always the risk that an innocent idea will be interfered with," says Mrs Maita sadly.

The original Tamagotchi is oval, selling at around £9.99. There is no such word in Japanese, but tamago means egg and tchi has a variety of meanings, including baby or loveable. A variety of creatures may appear, depending on the nature of the care given. Some look like something you would find at a school for tropical medicine. Others would have you reaching for the bug spray.

The Tamagotchi was initially aimed at teenagers and young female workers, "who manipulate communication in Japan and are very powerful," says Mrs Maita. Next month in the UK the DigiMon, short for Digital Monster, arrives, aimed at boys. By feeding it virtual protein, its owner will be rewarded by a cyberdog-of-war that can do battle with other Digi-Mons. Mrs Maita, somewhat unrealistically, emphasises the nurturing aspect. "Children are challenged to care for it so it grows into a strong boy."

In March, the more feminine Angel Tamagotchi, which arrives as a UFO and promises to look after its owner, goes on sale.

Mrs Maita works 12 hours a day at her job and plays golf in her spare time. She played with traditional toys as a child and admits she does not understand the technical side of her invention. When she has children she will "teach them the pleasures of Tamagotchi". She says this so charmingly that I bite back the impulse to throttle her on behalf of beleaguered parents everywhere.



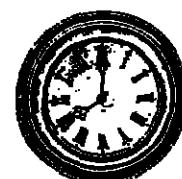
Aki Maita played with traditional toys as a child, but says that when she has children she will "teach them the pleasures of Tamagotchi"



Mulberry
Handbags
(as supplied to Santa Claus)
41/42 New Bond Street, London
11/12 Grog Court, London
185 Brompton Road, London
62 King Street, Manchester
23/25 Swingate, York
Tottenham & Heathrow
Open on Sundays from
30th Nov to 21st Dec
For enquiries telephone
0171 491 3900



JUST WHEN THE
DAYS ARE GROWING
SHORTER,
HARRODS MAKES
THEM LONGER.



Opening Hours:
Today until December 23rd,
Mondays to Saturdays,
10am to 8pm.

It's that time of year when Harrods makes being late a virtue. From today until December 23rd, hours of business for all departments will be extended from 10am until 8pm. So take advantage of the longer days to enjoy Harrods festive 'Nutcracker Christmas' decorations, and to find absolutely everything on your Christmas list.



Harrods Ltd., Knightsbridge, London SW1X 7NL. Tel: 0171-730 1234.

Frank's modest proposal

Field aims to take the state out of welfare, says John Lloyd

Oh Tony (says the Parliamentary Labour Party), we gathered golden opinions from the people only six months ago which "would be worn in their newest gloss; not cast aside so soon". Do not, dear leader, paint us as men and women who deprive the hard-pressed of any of the little they have. Let us seem to be carers and sharers for a little longer.

The plea falls on deaf ears. The Prime Minister has listened, sympathised (up to a point), respected (up to a point) the place of conscience and dissent. But he told the PLP on Wednesday morning, "it is this party which built the welfare state and this Government that will save the welfare state". So stop whining and "explain what the Government is doing, and why".

Why is precisely the point. Tony Blair, off today on a reflective awayday at Chequers with his No 10 policy unit, still searches for a story to tell his party, his country and perhaps even himself. A story is the modern — or perhaps very old-fashioned — word for an ideology: an overarching rationale within which the main measures of government fit. Margaret Thatcher had the fusion of the market and liberty. Blair has pocketed that as a given, and wants to move beyond it. But what is available?

From the dear caves of the Department of Social Security comes a voice, at once self-assured and self-deprecating, anxious to be of assistance. It belongs to Mr Frank Field, the department's Minister of State and licensed thinker on the Big Idea — which is the restructuring of the welfare state.

Mr Field, work extraordinary of the pensions and social security worlds, member of the Church of England synod, lover of teasing flights of fancy and of intellectual explorations, has had a hard coming to Government. His relationship with Harriet Harman, his Secretary of State, is rancorous: she sees him as a barr under her saddle, he sees her as a (metaphorically only) ugly sister who will stop him going to the ball. Gordon Brown at the Treasury regards him with dour suspicion, seeing in his rethinking of welfare a No 10-inspired challenge to his own domination of the process. Even No 10 is getting restive at the long gestation period of his welfare reform.

What does Mr Field have going for him? He will have a Green Paper on welfare reform out early next year. This, he believes, should not be a grand plan, but the clear beginning of a process of incremental change in welfare provision which, bit by bit, win the trust of the population and reshape their expectations of what they get from the State.

Welfare reform, Mr Field believes, will take many parliaments to achieve — but since he also believes, unlike the Prime Minister, that the creation of the welfare state lies centuries back in the development of the Poor Law rather than with the Labour Governments of 1945-51, he

has a certain equanimity about a long timescale. At the heart of his proposals will be something which a leader hungry for a moral narrative can take, and make his Government's. In a series of recent lectures, Mr Field has returned again and again to what he sees as a crippling feature of the post-Beveridge welfare state — that is, that it relied almost wholly on statism and chased out voluntarism.

In a talk to the Industrial Christian Fellowship last month, he argued that the working men and women of the 19th century, who banded together in unions and friendly societies to protect themselves against the misfortunes of life, in so doing "raised their characters on to a higher moral plane [in] noble drive to self-improvement".

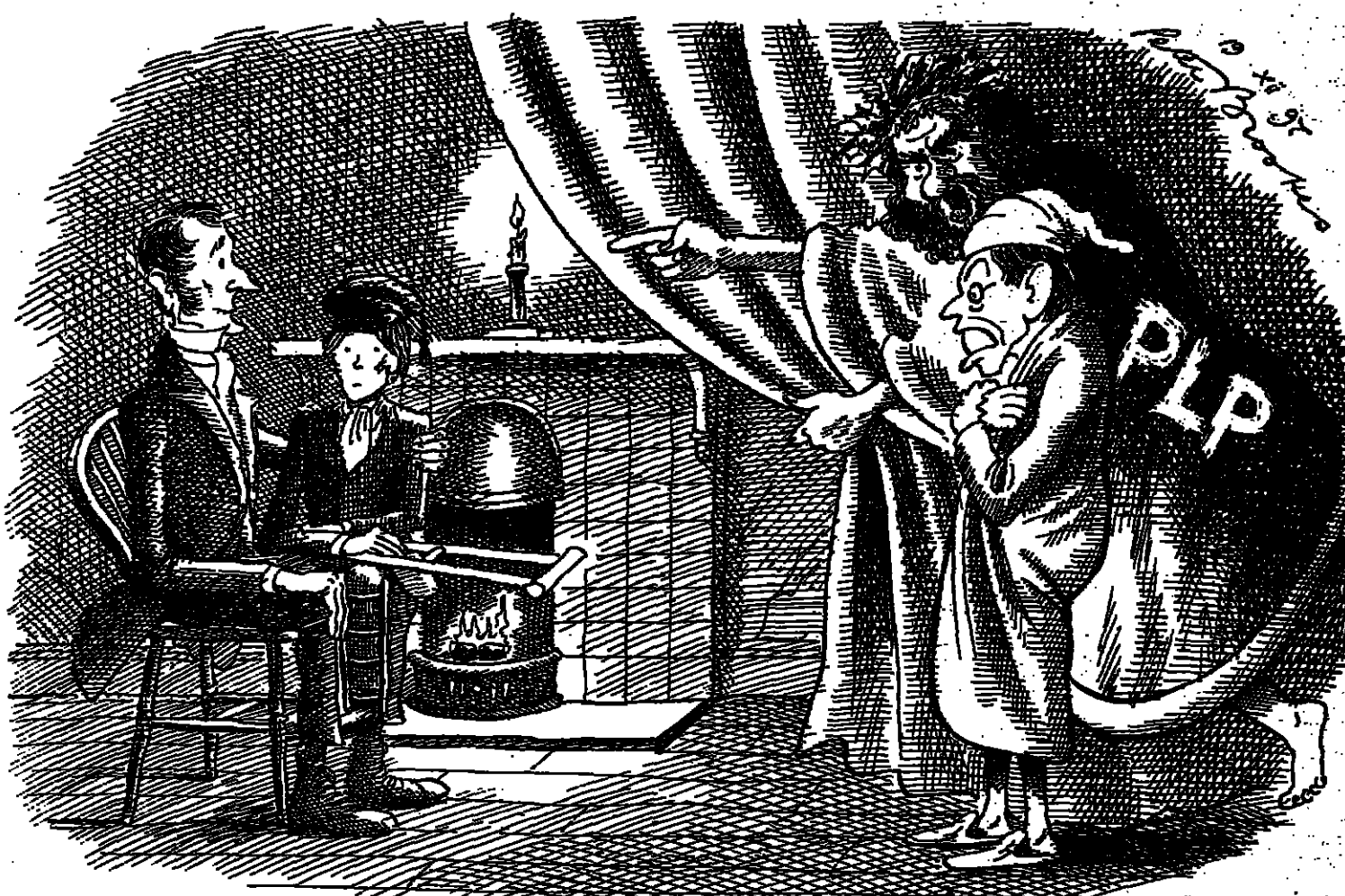
"We must recognise," he said in the George Orwell lecture earlier this month, "the state to be an organisation which can make welfare available without providing it itself." Field is reaching back to the 19th century to reanimate the voluntarism which will be required to provide personal security in the 21st. The difference will be the continuation of a strong state acting as regulator and, to an extent, equaliser; the parallel will be that responsibility will reside with the individual, or with the collectives he and she creates and sustains.

This is not socialism as it has come to be understood. But it is a narrative different from that of privatisation. It replaces that 1980s word with a new-old century one: co-operation. New Labour has remained in touch with non-liberal opinion on social issues. The rhetoric on families is designed to appeal to it — even if, for the moment, it is little more than rhetoric.

The cuts on single-parent benefit have been supported by *The Sun* and *The Mirror* and *The Express*, not just because they are in varying degrees of thrall to the Government (as they are), but also because their readers are unlikely to feel too roused on behalf of unmarried mothers, who are seen as the authors of or collaborators in their own calamities. Welfare reform can gain and keep support — but only if the population is brought to feel some ownership of it.

It must become, again, part of popular morality. In fact, self-reliance has never ceased to be so: it is simply that now the state cannot afford to carry on without it. "Individuals," says Mr Field, "are capable of coexisting with the state, alongside, rather than inside." Increasing that capacity for independence: pushing responsibility again down to the individual and family and voluntary society levels; toning up the withered muscles of civil society — these aims would support Mr Field's endeavours, and could do the Government's, if it were to focus on them. A theme for the policy awayday.

The author is associate editor of the *New Statesman*.



"If Tiny Tim be like to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population." Scrooge hung his head to hear his own words quoted by the Spirit. — *A Christmas Carol* (2)

None but the brave

Are Blair and Brown, like Thatcher and Howe, ready to face down their party?

We postulate too many watersheds in politics, but I feel another coming on. As the year closes it seems to me that Gordon Brown and Tony Blair really are approaching a watershed.

Watershed is a weary metaphor, its link to the original geographical reference already badly trampled. In topography a watershed is a line of separation between waters flowing to different rivers; a high point from which the fallen rain might flow equally this way or that, having chosen which, can never return to the alternative course. Geoffrey Howe's 1981 Budget deserved the metaphor. The Chancellor settled more than his Government's commitment to monetarism, important as that was. By choosing to punish further when there were already cries of pain, Howe gave earnest of the tough-mindedness which was to become a hallmark of Margaret Thatcher's administration. It was in that dreadful year, followed by the seeming disaster of the Falklands occupation, that Margaret Thatcher's sun burnt through the clouds to blaze eventually over two more election victories.

But it is important to recall how uncertain it all felt at the time. At the time the Tory "wets" believed themselves to be — and looked to many — like the coming thing. Forgetting how precarious her position seemed, we find it hard now to recapture the excitement caused when Julian Critchley wrote an anonymous article "by a Tory MP" in *The Observer* criticising Mrs Thatcher's leadership. To a big group of Tory MPs, those early clouds around her leadership appeared less like the morning mist than the fog closing in. What now seems tough-minded then looked hard-hearted. Her strong leadership, as we now see it, was dismissed as tinpot authoritarianism. She wets, now derided as gnats that she swatted, stung like hornets.

In one of the rudest letters ever written politely, Samuel Johnson inveighs bitterly against a patron who "looks with unconcern on a Man struggling for Life in the water, and when he has reached ground encourages him with help". There is, as poor Johnson discovered, a time-lag between the display of a quality and its recognition in the world. We call someone "brave" only after they have come to hold sway and need their courage less. There will have been a moment when they really were brave, but it will have occurred much

earlier, before their spurs were won. We begin calling people "original" at about the point they are starting to be famous and predictable. The time of their originality will have been an uncertain time. Thatcher was brave and original before the world acknowledged it; rather less so after her party had fallen at her feet. This is the time for Tony Blair and Gordon Brown to be brave, and original. It is their watershed year. By December next year we shall know whether this Labour Prime Minister is a man to be knocked off course by his party, as both his predecessors, James Callaghan and Harold Wilson, were. If Blair and Brown back down on welfare reform, and if Labour starts sacrificing good, unpopular ministers such as Geoffrey Robinson to the mob, then the waters of this administration will by then be flowing towards a river which can take Labour's fate in only one direction. But if Blair manages to hold the line all through next year, his leadership will have passed a gruelling test.

I am coming to believe that what Gerald Kaufman thinks today, others say tomorrow. It was at the last election that one that Mr Kaufman called the choice between Labour and the Tories a tug-of-war between fear and loathing; and it was at the last election that fear lost — overcome not, as Mr Blair boasts, by hope, but by loathing. On May 30 this year, writing in the *New Statesman*, Kaufman described the new Parliamentary Labour Party as "the happiest I have ever known". He went on to predict that it would not last. He heard little grumbles already, and...

...as time goes by these mild and good-natured grumbles could turn into genuine dissatisfaction. After all, the two other Labour governments with big majorities ended in tears. The much overrated Clement Attlee so mismanaged his 1945 majority of 144 that it was eliminated by 1951. Harold Wilson's 1966 majority of 97 was wiped out in 1970. Both times, dissatisfaction among Labour MPs played a significant part in the defeats.

Within seven months of his general election triumph, and on the issue of

benefits to lone parents, Tony Blair has faced a rebellion of more than a hundred of his MPs — for that is the figure you reach if you add the 47 who voted against the Government to what appears to be a larger number who defied their whips and abstained. And that battle could prove a minor skirmish in comparison with what faces Blair and Brown should they go ahead with serious reforms to disability benefit.

On single parents, a number of Labour backbenchers were arm-twisted into giving their front bench the benefit of the doubt just this once, while issuing due warning, privately to the whips, that this kind of thing must not happen again. They will be harder to cajole, next time. There was colourful talk in the press about

whips handing "the yellow card" to rebels: little mention was made of the yellow card which a big section of the Parliamentary Labour Party now believes it has handed to the whips. But although the language is coded, today's *New Statesman* article by Clive Soley, chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party, is one of the longest yellow cards in Labour's history. Prime Minister and Chancellor have been put under notice that no shake-up of benefits which creates large numbers of losers among the disabled should be imposed.

But it must be. Mr Soley is just wrong. Although opposition to this reform is strengthening by the hour, the case for it is actually stronger than the case for cutting lone parents' benefits. Everybody knows — the Tories certainly know — that Frank Field is right. The last Government was hugely embarrassed by the rocketing cost of benefits for the disabled and would undoubtedly have proposed reform. Luckily for Mr Hague, his predecessors had not said so in print and — opposition being a cynical business — this frees his party to make trouble for the Government now.

And trouble they will make. So will the Liberal Democrats. There is a fundamental design fault in Mr Blair's much-touted philosophy of "detrisking" Westminster politics,

which commentators have taken to mean bidding for Liberal Democrat support against his own left wing. On most of the issues where he might actually need support against his own left wing, the Liberal Democrats are going to be with his left wing. Many of Mr Blair's biggest and most bitter battles are likely to be about welfare and spending.

If he wants a detribalisation strategy of any use to him in the division lobbies (and indeed, in the press), then it is with the Conservatives that he needs to build bridges — as a rather dismayed *Guardian* leading article pointed out last week, noting the coalition that had won Harriet Harman her victory over single mothers. It is, oh dear, Mr Kaufman again who has pointed out that the most troublesome press criticism that Labour now faces comes from *The Guardian*. Tory press commentary is giving him a much fairer wind. This is "detrisking", captain, but not as we know it.

I have suggested parallels between the crunch Margaret Thatcher faced in the first two years of her premiership and the crunch Tony Blair must now contemplate in his mastery of his party. I have said that her assignment was a tough one, and that she was brave.

Mr Blair's assignment is tougher, and he will need to be braver. That is because Margaret Thatcher's challenge was to be true to her party's core principles. Mr Blair's challenge is to betray his party's core principles. Even during her worst political storms, Margaret Thatcher could put a sheet anchor down into the current of a century of Conservative thinking and belief, and be steadied by it. She was going with the grain. Tony Blair has no such luxury. He is all against the grain of his party's history and he knows it. His lifelines are to his new fair-weather friends in middle England and not to the old friends of his movement: the poor, the dispossessed, the working class, the academic left, *Hamstead*, the *LSE* and the trade unions. These he must betray, exchanging their love and constancy for the more fickle affections of the *Sieff*-owning classes.

Will his party let him do it? It is determined to try? Or were the Tory boneheads, who a year ago were braying that the Left would resurface after the election, right after all? In which case (as Lord Melbourne remarked), "What all the wise men said would happen has not happened, and what all the damned fools said would happen has come to pass."

Matthew Parris

Philip Howard



■ Humbug, and this time my opinion won't change

The bell struck midnight. Scrooge groaned at this 154th annual resurrection of his Christmas carol, and reached for the Teasmade on his bedside table. But this uncharacteristic luxury contained only hot water, without the usual comforting smell of scalded teabags. And this year for a change there were two Ghosts of Christmas Yet to Come gliding towards the foot of his futon. They were trying, not entirely successfully, to wipe out their normally insincere smiles, and they were followed by a cameraman on a dolly and several production assistants with clipboards and headphones.

"Who — who are you?" quavered Scrooge, who, if truth be told, was getting fed up with his annual production as a Christmas morality tale. "And where is my tea? I simply cannot go through this annual pantomime as Mr Meazle without my brace of Telfey's."

"We are the Rupert and Julie Show," groined the two anchormen: in something close to unison, while the PAs whispered into their mouthpieces and the sound engineers fenced with their booms and looked bored. "And have you not heard the midnight newscast? A compound nucleus of EU scientists has suggested that the tannin in tea may give you TSE, or Tea Scaly End. The chances of it doing so are only 1.1 billion to one. You are 100,000 times more likely to be killed in a traffic accident, and 10,000 times more likely to die after being hit by a block of frozen cucumber dropped from an airliner. But the minister has decided that he must follow the advice of his scientists and abide by Brussels's scruples. So tea on the leaf is banned from midnight, and you must ham it up this year without your early-morning stiffener."

"But why do you look so sombre and serious, dread anchormen?" cried Scrooge. "Of course I do not possess a set myself. But I have watched your show through the window of the television rental shop. And it seemed to me that its format was for you to look sunny however irritating or imbecile your allegedly celebrity guests and representative spokespersons."

Oh secret and self-contained man, as solitary as an oyster, intoned Rupert and Julie together. "Can you not tell from our solemn faces and the funeral background music that the nation has suffered another shocking celebrity tragedy? So we are going to cover it in our standard Celebrity Sadness Format or CSF. This means that we shall look solemn and repeat the sad news throughout the night, updating as we go and interspersing it briefly with the only three items of real news that we have. So over to you, Julian."

Newscaster: "The Seoul stock market has crashed and the South Korean economy has gone down the plughole. An earthquake has destroyed both Forth bridges and most of Edinburgh. And revolutionaries in the rebellious Russian province of Qazqazqaz, angry at the shortage of vowels, have launched nuclear missiles at NATO headquarters in Brussels and London. And now, back to you, Rupert and Julie."

"Thank you, Terry. And now to see how saddened the ordinary British public is by this sad news, over to our man in the street with a camera crew. How sad is the ordinary British public about this shocking celebrity tragedy, Joseph?"

"Thank you, Rupert. Thank you, Julie. As you can see, members of the public have spontaneously gathered in the street in front of our cameras to express their grief at this shocking celebrity tragedy. And here are a husband and wife who have come a long way to be present in person at this solemn event. How far have you come?"

Husband and wife together: "We have driven 750 miles. As soon as we saw the tragic celebrity logo on TV and heard the tragic celeb music, we got into our car and drove through the night. We live in Harlow. So most of that mileage was taken by getting lost on the elevated sections of the M1 and trying to find somewhere to park."

Reporter: "And how do you feel? Grieved and devastated?"

Husband and wife together: "Definitely." Members of the crowd behind them wave at the camera. Reporter: "And now back to Rupert and Julie." Scrooge: "This must be another bad dream. Please let this festive celebrity go back to sleep for another year."

Bishop's tale

THE voice of reason is to be heard from beyond the grave. Shortly before his death, Lord Wyatt of Weeford wrote a play containing a stinging attack on liberal clergy. Now friends of the late polemicist, politician and *bon vivant* are keen to transport the work to the stage. *The Bishop's Wife* attacks hypocrisy, homosexuality and Radio 4's *Thought for the Day*, which is portrayed as a vehicle for pompous cant. Wyatt, an atheist, hoped to have the play performed next year. It is a fruitless tale about a sanctimonious bishop who pontificates on *Thought for the Day* rather more often than he sings *alltelia* in his parish church. To relieve the tedium of marriage to a retired actress, he spends nights sloping off to his mistress, rising to preach family values over the airwaves. Friends are determined to see the play staged. "It would be a wonderful memorial party to Woodrow," says Norman Lamont.

"He often talked about the script and obviously loved writing it. He adored the theatre — he was a friend of Noël Coward." His anticlericalism developed late. "We went to a church in Tuscany and he seemed terribly moved. He loved the Gregorian chanting."

● BEFORE a jolly lunch at Christopher's yesterday, I bumped into our Health Secretary wheezing up the stairs. "I am well apart from a

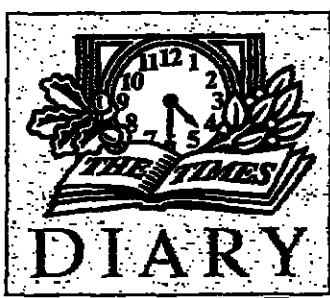


Friends: Lamont and Wyatt

sore throat," said Frank Dobson. "Not chicken flu, I trust?" He responded with such assurance, I wondered if the ministry was doing all it might to stop the killer bug.

Final Straw

LOLLIPOP women have been banned from wearing Father Christmas hats by Jack Straw. "It's against the law to wear Santa hats,



If they don't wear standard uniform, they have no legal power to stop the traffic," thunders a tall stick at the Home Office. First victim is Mrs Pauline Allen from Essex. "It is ridiculous. I've been wearing one for ten years."

● ANN Widdecombe has a new starring role. The Tory grandee is to play a judge in a Channel 4 series discussing such issues as abortion and drugs in front of a jury. Judge Dredd: watch out.

Speechless

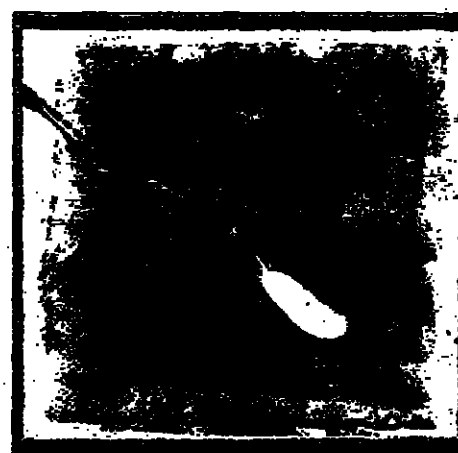
AS IF blessing Formula One with nine more seasons of tobacco-fuelled racing had not sullied the Government's name at the British Thoracic Society, Tessa Jowell has

let them down again. On Tuesday the health minister was to address them on "How the Government can stop young people smoking." She never turned up. "We were all expecting her — some were rather excited," says a smokeless sort. "No reason was given." A sidekick is vaguely apologetic: "She cancelled due to diary pressures."

● THAT orange fancier Lord Irvine of Lairg, refreshingly free of false modesty, has been telling friends about the Scotland Bill. "I wrote it. All of it," he expounded over a glass. This could be news to his old friend Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, whose wife Alison left him for Irvine more than 20 years ago. Dewar's office is puzzled. "Oh dear," muttered a source there. "It was a major team effort."

Brushing up

WHILE her husband Alan grapples with the nature of authenticity in court, the real Jane Clark has stood up. She is returning to the painting career she abandoned to bring up her family and has completed a series of pictures of the First World War. One, *Letter from Home*, is displayed in an exhibition by MPs. The mournful piece



Jane Clark's painting *Letter from Home*, and the artist herself

depicts poppies, blood and a white feather. Her husband, author of *The Donkeys*, is urging her to paint more. "She is a beautiful artist," he says, "rather surreal." She is taking his advice: "He would have loved his father to have seen them. I'd like to sell some to pay for my addiction to gardening and art shops." Her impressive work puts MPs to shame. Only four submitted daubings. "I allowed Mrs Clark to display because my colleagues are too bone idle," says Michael Colvin, MP, the



Jane Clark's painting *Letter from Home*, and the artist herself

organiser. "She's the first spouse to be exhibited in the Commons." I hope it leads to a successful career.

● AT a City party, PR giants Brian Basham and David Burnside met with an attempted embrace that went wrong. As Basham, averted his head, Burnside's nose collided with Basham's ear. Blood spurted from Burnside's nose. "I'd rather physical injury than a Belfast kiss," says Basham.

JASPER GERARD



A TONGUE FOR EUROPE

Labour manners imperil the Blair message

Since May the new Labour Government has been a source of fascination, envy and hope for much of Europe. Continental voters have been as dazzled as the British by Labour's pace, style and promises. Tony Blair has high hopes of using Britain's European Union presidency to promote British values of openness and deregulation. The machine-minders of Downing Street have, therefore, been puzzled and irked by recent criticism in the European press that Mr Blair is "arrogant", that his claims to leadership in the European Union are overweening.

They ought not to be puzzled. The problem lies in themselves. What is abundantly clear, to a growing number outside Downing Street is that the message is being sabotaged by the arrogance, ignorance and bad manners of the messengers. Britain, like America, has never treated foreign correspondents with much respect, believing that they deliver no votes and therefore have little claim on officials' time and attention. Under Labour, however, this attitude has been exacerbated by the manic insistence of attempting to keep all briefings, where-so-ever they are aimed, "on message".

French, German and Italian newspapers cannot be so manipulated. They do not see policy through the eyes of British domestic interests, do not share the same assumptions and political short-hand and cannot therefore be "spun" to deliver government policy in the way its spokesmen would demand.

A correspondent for Austria's most respected newspaper has gone so far as to tell colleagues that Alistair Campbell, the Prime Minister's spokesman, behaves as though he was a member of a master race. He insists on "Victory for Tony Blair or shut up", she wrote. There may be some hyperbole here, even in respect of so confident a figure as Mr Campbell. But the attack should cause Mr Blair concern.

The Austrian sentiment finds echoes

across the Continent. Journalists from France, Germany, Italy and Spain — all countries whose attitudes and votes Britain needs to court if it is to aspire to a successful presidency of the European Union — recall instances where they have been brushed aside, dismissed and collectively mocked. Charlie Whelan, Gordon Brown's press spokesman, is alleged to have described a group as "that lot" who purvey "Euro-crap" and "Euro-bollocks".

Continental newspapers are, indeed, somewhat uncritical of their political masters' great European project. The British tradition is more combative. Sir Bernard Ingham, Margaret Thatcher's ears and voice for more than a decade, set a certain standard of brusqueness: but he was never accused of ill manners on the current scale.

Explanations are no excuses. If a British briefer turns on a Swede and tells her to repeat her question when she can speak English, he alienates, at a stroke, all her readers from one of Britain's most steadfast supporters. When a Foreign Office diplomat, practised in French, turns his back on a journalist from Paris with the comment "I don't answer questions in French", he reinforces every cliché that Robin Cook is trying to dispel.

Image-making differs from country to country. While humour does not translate easily, rudeness is universally recognised. In two weeks' time, Britain will assume responsibility for briefing journalists from 15 different countries after every minister's meeting, every informal conclave and every international summit. If its official spokesmen continue to treat the media of Britain's partners with contempt, disparagement and linguistic ignorance, the Government will find that within weeks its stewardship will be derided, its achievements belittled and its goals mocked. Careless talk costs political lives.

MANDELA TO MBEKI

The ANC and white South Africans must adapt to each other

South Africa has this week witnessed an extraordinarily smooth transition. Nelson Mandela handed over the leadership of the African National Congress to Thabo Mbeki, a process that will almost certainly be repeated for the State Presidency after national elections in 16 months. Winnie Madikizela-Mandela's extravagant push for the post of deputy president disappeared. Even if her name had been put forward she would not have received that support required for nomination. Whether she is a spent force will be better measured through the contest for the National Executive Committee today.

This calm transfer of authority has been a real achievement for Mr Mandela. In a continent where rulers routinely continue until removed by coup or death, his decision to step down will set a potent precedent. Many white South Africans will feel, however, that the security of certainty offered by these events has been curtailed by Mr Mandela's address to the ANC activists. A man who has come to embody racial reconciliation chose to launch a set of attacks on the former ruling race. The tone of his contempt for opponents of the ANC did little to promote confidence in the prospects for pluralist democracy. As Tony Leon, leader of the free-market Democratic Party, rightly argued, the speech was the "low-water mark of his presidency". Mr Mandela's willingness to embrace his former wife will have struck many as equally inappropriate.

Mr Mandela's words, it is claimed, were inspired by Mr Mbeki. If true, an exceptionally cunning strategy has been executed. Mr Mbeki's own remarks upon his elevation to the ANC presidency were much more measured. He also suggested that many

whites were oblivious to the conditions of the majority around them. But he conceded that the Government had not argued effectively that a non-racial society was in the interests of all races. Over the past three years Mr Mbeki has been a proponent of financial orthodoxy and a friend of business interests. It may be that he chose Mr Mandela to deliver a message to that constituency.

In more temperate language, there is a substantial case that white South Africans would be wise to consider. There are aspects of apartheid that oblige atonement. Too many corporate executives have complained to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission about the damage to their pockets and profits from white rule: not surprisingly they have infuriated moderates such as Mr Mbeki. South Africa's continued stability demands continued action on education and infrastructure to assist impoverished millions. This will, realistically, require a small sacrifice of sorts from the entrenched elite.

The challenge for Mr Mbeki is to promote that process without counter-productive initiatives. South Africa must preserve a First World economy while addressing its Third World issues. Reconciliation and reconstruction should operate in tandem. His most effective weapon in this quest would be more, not less, capitalism. The apartheid era spawned a corporatist economy with cartels in every sector. The limited liberalisation and privatisation that the ANC has encouraged so far has been more effective in attacking the control exercised by a small network of white families than a dozen speeches from Mrs Madikizela-Mandela. This may not be a popular formula this week but it should be the one that Mr Mbeki adheres to in office.

PRISONERS OF POLITICS

Justice has become a casualty of the peace process

Equality under the law is the cornerstone of civilization, arbitrary justice its dry rot. Men properly convicted of murder should serve the sentence that justice demands, not that which expediency may require.

Although justice may be appropriately tempered by mercy, in Northern Ireland it is being administered through the looking-glass. Men who plotted murder, with malice aforethought and heedless of the inevitable misery, will spend this Christmas with their families and in the knowledge that other colleagues are being released altogether. At the same time two young men who made a terrible mistake under great pressure while risking their own lives for others remain in jail. The IRA's bombers who dine at home this Christmas, and the Scots Guardsmen who languish in jail, are the underserving beneficiaries and the unfortunate victims of the subversion of justice designed to propitiate the violent.

There is a high political defence for the indulgent treatment of Paul Kavanagh and Thomas Quigley, whose month-long bombing campaign claimed three lives and blighted many more. That defence can be used to justify the Christmas release of Patrick Magee, the Brighton bomber sentenced by a judge who branded him "a man of exceptional cruelty and inhumanity".

These men, and many other prisoners, have a special place in the republican movement and their support for the peace process is vital to the maintenance of the

ceasefire. If they enjoy tangible benefits from the ceasefire, it is argued, they will lend their weight to the argument for its maintenance. But what sort of ceasefire is it that relies on the pampering of calculating killers to keep it in place?

The Christmas release of IRA terrorists is not the only evidence of a political intervention in what should be the autonomous realm of the courts. The continued incarceration of Jim Fisher and Mark Wright, two Scots Guardsmen who killed a suspected terrorist in 1992, can only be understood as an act of appeasement. They made a terrible mistake in shooting an innocent boy, but they acted under pressure in circumstances which their training led them to believe was an ambush. They have served more than five years for an offence similar to that of Lee Clegg, another soldier who killed in error and served three and a half years.

The only justification for their remaining in jail is a fear of inflaming republican feeling. The support for their release expressed by the Taiton MP, Martin Bell, who knows first hand about life under fire, should encourage the fair-minded to respond sympathetically to their plight. These young men were serving their country, made a mistake and paid the price. Keeping them in prison for fear of the republican mob is also a mistake. The price will always be a peace that depends on the goodwill of men motivated by malice.

Blair's X factor on single currency

From Mr Ian Taylor, MP for Esher and Walton (Conservative)

Sir, The euro is likely to be the single currency covering 80 per cent of the European single market. No wonder that the Prime Minister, in his article "Neither a surrender, nor isolation" (December 13), stresses his determination to ensure that the powers of the Euro X committee are only to be informal. Even if he succeeds, the odds are that the committee will have a powerful influence. Your own leader, "Blair's X factor" (December 13), was wrong to say he should have dismissed the issue with a Gallic shrug.

So far, most commentators on EMU highlight the threats to the UK from membership. The events of the last few days underline that there are also political and economic costs in not joining. Staying out will be painful. The Prime Minister had better make up his mind rapidly where he stands. If he does not want to be marginalised, or to lose influence over matters affecting vital national interests, he must have the courage to provide a clear timetable for the readiness of the UK to join EMU. This will entail setting out more precisely the policies to achieve the necessary convergence.

Yours faithfully,
IAN TAYLOR,
House of Commons,
December 15.

From Mr Selwyn Hodson Pressinger

Sir, It is doubtful Mr Blair's article will impress the "in" members of the Euro X club. Nonetheless he still deserves our support.

Many like myself who have worked in continental Europe in recent years appreciate the merits of a "common" currency. It was something the market was already fast resembling, being Europe's common currency by reference. For this reason, many of us were initially enthusiastic about a "single" currency, which seemed a logical progression from the common currency.

However, the full implications of EMU and the difficulties arising from the EU's agreed timetable for the imposition of a single currency have given genuine cause for concern. As most British economists agree, this is not the time for us to join. Naturally the Euro X "in" members are unsympathetic to our position. After all, theirs are the economies most at risk. If exclusion from their meetings is a price Britain has to pay, so be it.

Yours faithfully,
SELWYN HODSON PRESSINGER,
4 Lyall Street, SW1X 8DW.

Tory leadership

From Sir Julian Critchley

Sir, The campaign launched by some Tory MPs in favour of one man, one vote (OMOV) for the leadership of the Tory party (report and leading article, December 13) is a giant step in the wrong direction.

Any observer who has attended a Conservative Party conference in whatever capacity can only have been alarmed by the prejudices shown by the bulk of the party activists who attend such jamborees. With a few exceptions, the "floor" consists of right-wing Tories of the most unattractive kind: racists, floggers and hangers, and passionate "Euro-sceptics".

I have been attending party conferences for thirty years. In each case the "battle" waged was between a relatively moderate platform and an extremist rank-and-file. Ask Lord Whitelaw, who, as Home Secretary, was obliged to defend good sense against a noisy and foolish opposition. Throw them a bone by all means, but make it a small one.

Yours etc,
JULIAN CRITCHLEY,
19 Broad Street,
Ludlow SY8 1NG,
December 17.

Oaths of allegiance

From Professor Keith Kyle

Sir, I was not able in the course of a short letter (December 4) to go into the detail of the many stages of the Bradlaugh case, to which I made allusion when addressing the position of the MPs from Belfast West and Mid-Ulster. As my friend Sir Ludovic Kennedy quite correctly points out (letter, December 13; see also letter, December 6), during the course of the controversy in 1880 and subsequently, Bradlaugh did several times express willingness to take the oath and in fact administered it to himself.

But the points that are relevant here are that the cause of the row was his wish in the first place to affirm rather than to take a (to him) meaningless oath, and the refusal of the House up to 1886 to allow him to take the oath on account of his having made his original stand.

Historical analogies are never exact. But this one raised, though it did not solve, the same issue that is raised in the cases of Messrs Adams and McGuinness: is a constituency entitled to be represented by the person it chooses or not? I think it is now generally acknowledged that the House did not enhance its reputation by its 19th-century response.

Yours faithfully,
KEITH KYLE,
(Visiting Professor of History,
University of Ulster),
25 Oppidians Road, NW3 3AG.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Why charities merit their tax breaks

From the Chief Executive of the Charities Aid Foundation

Sir, Matthew Parris's logic ("Uncharitable thoughts", December 12) seems to me to be back to front. In essence he writes that the taxes we all pay have to be increased to pay for charity tax exemptions. And worse, some charities have become very successful, which makes the tax burden on you and me even greater and more outrageous.

Looking through the telescope from the right end we see this picture: people getting together to do good in the interest of society as a whole (not for themselves) may create legal entities. As these entities do not make profits or benefit, say, shareholders, the tax issue doesn't arise. Indeed why should it? Surely this is highly desirable?

Incidentally, the aggregate of charitable activity has just reached 4 per cent of GDP and is not forecast to rise, which puts his article into perspective. This level of activity would plummet if we were to decide, as he suggests, to tax people trying to do good in this organised way.

He suggests the Wellcome Trust is a "bulky" and a tax drain. It is also a huge benefit to the nation. Would we really prefer not to have philanthropists?

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL BROPHY,
Chief Executive,
Charities Aid Foundation,
Kings Hill, West Malling ME19 4TA,
December 12.

From Mr Martin Eade

Sir, Matthew Parris's criticism of large charities gaining unfair tax advantages, coupled with an apparent assumption that smaller charities are humble amateurs, is a caricature of the voluntary sector.

Without charities who would fight the unpopular causes? Would Aids and HIV have been fought as successfully by government departments as by the Terrence Higgins Trust and the London Lighthouse, which were close to the communities most affected and could galvanise hundreds of volunteers into action? Would people with a mental illness have gained a voice and better services without the support of Sane and the National Schizophrenia Fellowship?

These organisations would appear among the so-called "walking great charities" singled out for criticism, yet

without their pioneering zeal the lot of people marginalised by society would be desperate.

Many of these organisations, too, provide community care of the highest standards; others, such as Crisis, go where governments fear to tread. They supplement government grants with their own fundraising and volunteering, thus ensuring that people's lives are lived with dignity and hope, as well as saving the Exchequer millions of pounds.

Is it not only fair that organisations harnessing all this voluntary effort should be supported by tax breaks from the Exchequer, not maligned by members of the "chattering classes"?

Yours charitably,
MARTIN EADE,
(Executive Director,
Association for Continence Advice,
Chief Executive, The Terrence Higgins Trust, 1988-90),
Winchester House, Kennington Park,
Cranmer Road, The Oval, SW9 6EJ,
December 12.

From the Director of Charity Check

Sir, Peter Brown's statement ("Watch out, crooks about", December 1) that "Surprisingly, the law does not prevent any competent crook from registering or acquiring registered charities" brought an uncomfortable truth into the open.

The Charities Aid Foundation has said: "The current system of registration is the lowest common denominator. It doesn't guarantee a level of worthiness or standards of behaviour" (Reader's Digest, November 1995).

If some simple precautions were more widely taken to check that only genuine charities were allowed to make cash collections, hundreds of millions of pounds annually could be saved from going astray. Dubious off-street collections can be quickly banished if all those with discretion to allow collections make a point of first checking on the charity. Charity Check keeps a well used database.

We hope the Government will take an immediate decision to put things right. Official encouragement to take up genuine references could prevent most of the problem quickly, even before any legislation.

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP COWEN,
Director, Charity Check,
18 North End Road, NW11 7PH,
December 12.

Medical aid

From the Director of Voluntary Service Overseas

Sir, Like many readers, I expect, I was moved by the plight of the South African burns victim, Dorah Moekana (article, "Who will save this child?", December 16). At any time of year, heartfelt pleas for help should be heeded, but is the long-term solution simply a financial one?

Dorah's situation is shared by many children around the world. Training people to become doctors and nurses takes a long time and is expensive. Many newly qualified doctors in developing countries seek work in private hospitals or in the West. The result is a drastic shortage of skills and experience where they are needed most — in family clinics and rural hospitals.

That is why VSO supplies skilled and qualified professionals — sur-

geons, doctors, nurses, midwives — to share their knowledge and experience with local people. This way local people learn the skills they need to care for all kind of illnesses. VSO receives hundreds of requests for health professionals a year and relies on suitably qualified people in the UK volunteering to help children like Dorah in South Africa and 58 other countries around the world.

I hope this Christmas that people moved by Dorah's story will respond by donating money — but also by thinking about volunteering their much-needed skills overseas. It is only by considering the longer-term, sustainable solution for countries like South Africa that Dorah's plight won't be repeated time and time again.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID GREEN,
Director, VSO,
317 Putney Bridge Road, SW15 2PN,
December 16.

Antidepressant drugs

From Mr Charles Medawar

Sir, Professor George Beaumont (letter, December 12) takes me to task for suggesting that there is a real risk of dependence with antidepressant drugs, comparable to that with benzodiazepine tranquilisers such as diazepam (Valium) or lorazepam (Ativan). His views might have carried more weight with me if his links with the pharmaceutical industry were not so close — and had he not mounted an equally vigorous defence of the anti-arthritis drug, benoxaprofen (Opren), shortly before it was withdrawn in 1982.

Professor Beaumont acknowledges withdrawal problems with antidepressants, but fails to explain why there have been so many more than

reported with benzodiazepines; and he is certainly wrong to suggest that they are "invariably short-lived". For many users, that would prove true only if they were restarted on antidepressants. This would abort withdrawal effects, but only at the risk of compounding dependence problems in the longer term.

The Medicines Control Agency initially responded to my paper with kneejerk denials but has now undertaken to review the evidence I set out in the *International Journal of Risk & Safety in Medicine*. Professor Beaumont would be well advised to do the same.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES MEDAWAR
(Director),
Social Audit Ltd,
PO Box 111, London NW1 8XG.

Cold snipe

From Mr Peter Birnie

Sir, As an exile from the north of Scotland, I have always been amused by the reaction of the inhabitants of southern England to snow.

Yesterday we were regaled with reports on the news of deep snowfalls causing the closure of many schools in southwest England and I gave my normal inward guffaw.

Today you published a photograph of children playing in this "big snowfall" and my feelings were rewarded by the scene snowballers playing in about 1in of the white stuff, while in the background cars drive along what appears to be a totally clear road.

The teachers had a nice day off, I hope.

Yours faithfully,
PETER BIRNIE,
8 Dismal Crescent,
High Wycombe HP13 5EJ.
peter-birnie@pbnico.demon.co.uk
December 18.

Christmas aisles

From Mr Michael Snook

Sir, While, as Mr K. Porteous Wood of the National Secular Society opines (letter, December 16), the majority in this multicultural society are not practising Christians, the vast majority are celebrating Christmas, the festival commemorating the birth of Christ.

As for their investors and their employees should be congratulated for allowing the reminders of the very central reason for this happy season to be broadcast to their customers. Perhaps they will allow Mr Wood the same facility: I look forward to hearing his enlightening message when I am shopping next Christmas.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL SNOOK,
190 Twentywell Lane,
Sheffield S17 4QE.

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

Shylock as drawn by Shakespeare

From Mr Martin D. Yaffe

Sir, Heather Neill ("Shylock's pounded flesh", Arts, December 9) rightly notes that Shakespeare's alleged portrayal of Shylock "as a representative Jew" clashes with our judgment of his humanity and sophistication as "beyond any expectations we may have of his contemporaries".

I doubt, however, whether Shakespeare thought of the character as simply a representative of his religion. Shortly after sealing his bond with Antonio, for instance, Shylock deliberately decides to break with Jewish dietary law to attend an ensuing business dinner. Had he not done so, he would not have given his daughter opportunity to elope that evening; nor, subsequently, could he have included her despoiling him of his savings and marrying a Christian in the score he meant to settle with Antonio.

Later, in court, the two highest political authorities in the play, the Duke and Portia, attribute Shylock's hard-heartedness to his failure to live up to Jewish law rather than to that law as such. The Duke exhorts him, unsuccessfully, to exercise mercy in accordance with his Jewish upbringing; and Portia reminds him, in effect, that the Lord's Prayer is a Jewish as well as a Christian prayer.

I agree with Heather Neill that Shylock "was invented at a time when it would not have occurred to audiences to feel any discomfort at the portrayal of a villain with certain stereotypical racial characteristics". The Merchant of Venice works to increase their discomfort; and its subtle way of pinpointing the arch-Christian Antonio as Shylock's agent provocateur is further testimony to Shakespeare's humanity and sophistication.

Yours etc,
MARTIN D. YAFFE
(Author, *Shylock and the Jewish Question*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997),
University of North Texas,
PO Box 310920,
Denton, TX 76203-0920.
aurora@gte.net
December 9.

South Bank scheme

From Lord Hutchinson of Lullington, QC

Sir, In his article, "Will the glass wave hit a concrete wall?" (Arts, Architecture, December 10), Marcus Binney asks whether £108 million should now be spent on Richard Rogers's great glass roof over the South Bank. Binney describes it as "potentially the most beautiful London landmark of the Millennium". He also reports research showing "that 95 per cent of people say that the South Bank environment is appalling and puts them off coming".

What is appalling, I suggest, especially for the elderly, is getting there. In winter the long, dirty, wet and often icy walk from Waterloo Station, or across Hungerford or Waterloo bridges, or from the inadequate car parks, are each a nightmare.

What people need now is a simple, covered, clean, straight and level walk from Waterloo Station, which might, surely, today have a moving airport-type floor. Then we could relax and enjoy the Richard Rogers experience.

Yours faithfully,
JEREMY HUTCHINSON,
House of Lords,
December 10.

Commons complaints

From Mrs Sandra Lewin

Sir, When I was about 8 or 9 years old, I discovered that by effecting an insurance I was far from feeling, horrible little boys in the playground did not bother to put spiders down my back, but concentrated their attentions on the yelling and crying girls as this provided them with much more fun.

I wonder if the new influx of lady Labour MPs ("Stop moaning, Tories tell Labour sisters", report, December 13) should try this tactic in the hope that the horrible little boys in the House of Commons get bored and find some other means of satisfying their playground needs.

Yours sincerely,
S. LEWIN,
3 Bourne End Road,
Northwood, Middlesex HA6 3BP,
December 15.

Web of misery

From Mr David Leeson

Sir, You report today on the problems being faced by the ladybird spider, including the fact that the male of the species, having failed to mate, dies. I know exactly how he feels, and 40 years ago I was quite sure that I was going to die on several occasions, having failed to mate.

But even worse, if he succeeds, the female is then consumed by her ungrateful offspring. You say the future looked bleak for these poor creatures until the intervention of scientists and their spider "dating agency". I would say the present looks even bleaker.

In dying out I suspect they know exactly what they are doing. Scientists should leave them in peace.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID LEESON,
2/22 Wake Green Road,
Moseley, Birmingham B13 9PA,
December 16.

OBITUARIES

PROFESSOR R. V. JONES

R. V. Jones, CH, CB, CBE, FRS, wartime intelligence scientist and Professor of Natural Philosophy, University of Aberdeen, 1946-81, died in Aberdeen on December 17 aged 86. He was born on September 27, 1911.

When, in June 1940, an obscure Air Ministry scientific officer, R. V. Jones, was told to report to the Cabinet Room where Churchill was convening a meeting, he at first thought that his summons was a joke. Although he had been working for some months on Germany's innovative aerial weaponry Jones had no idea that he and his research had become a matter of such pressing concern at so high a level. But the new Prime Minister — a man of very different kidney from his predecessor — was alive to the vital importance of winning the scientific war at all costs. Abandoning all considerations of rank in that august company, he invited this extraordinarily young-looking man to tell the War Cabinet everything he knew about the German capability to bomb Britain.

Jones explained to the meeting that Germany had perfected techniques by which its bombers could fly along radio beams to bomb targets with hitherto unimagined precision. Britain would be vulnerable to pinpoint attack in any weather and at night. This was at a time when RAF attacks conducted in such conditions were missing their targets by a margin of several miles.

"When Dr Jones had finished," recorded Churchill, "there was a general air of incredulity". As a result Jones was given all the resources he needed to develop ways of combating this menace, and the bomber was beset. Churchill revelled in what he called "The Wizard War" and always acknowledged Jones with gratitude as "the man who broke the bloody beams".

It was the first of those strokes of genius by which Jones made his vital contribution to the victory over the Luftwaffe. These were many and varied: perhaps the most spectacular (and yet wonderfully simple) was "window", strips of metallic foil dropped from bombers, which could be made to confuse enemy ground radar and, on

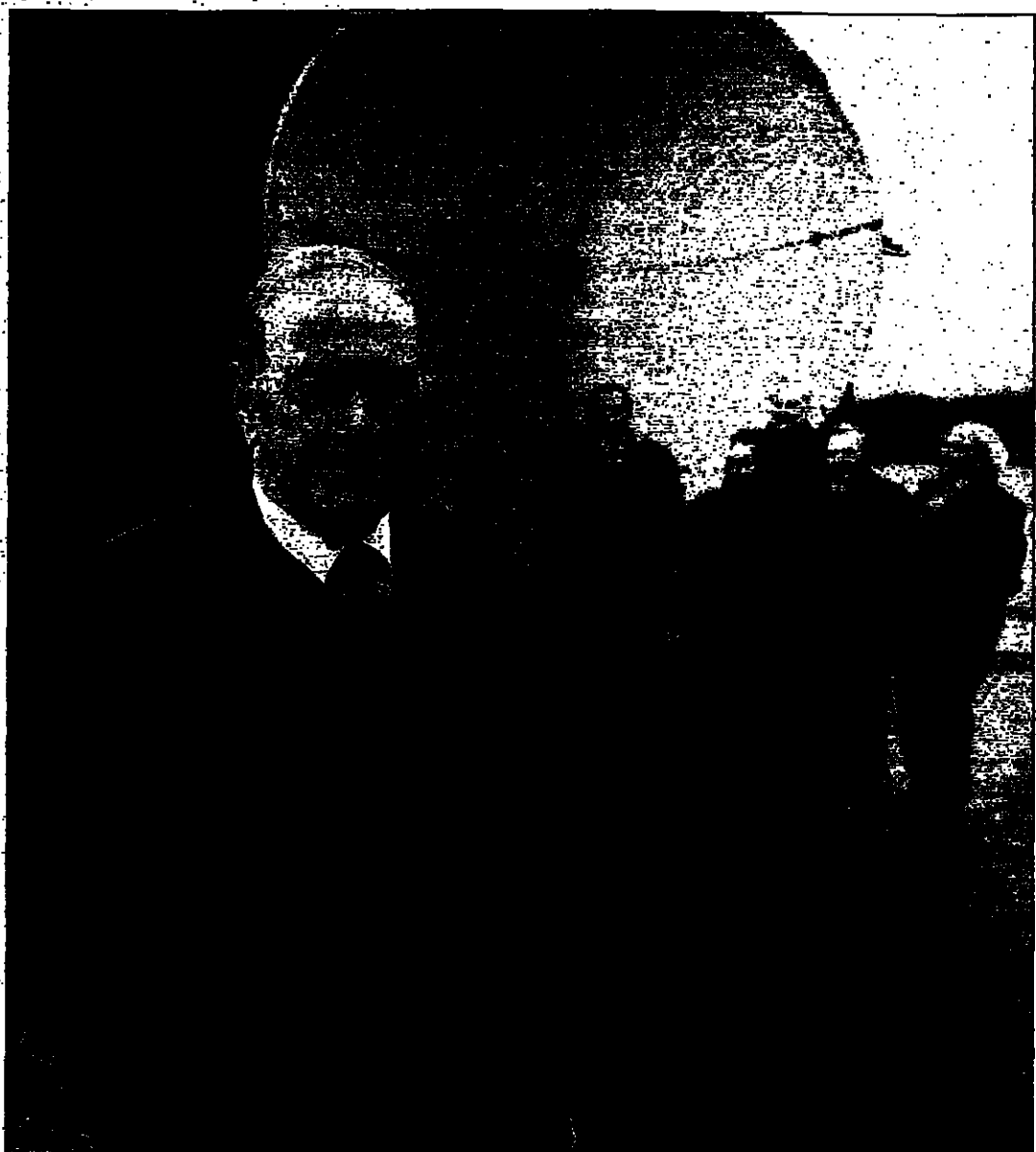
occasions — as at D-Day — to synthesise whole "ghost" fleets of Allied ships. Jones's exploits inspired the Yorkshire Television documentary series *The Secret War of Dr Jones* (based on the recollections which led to his book *Most Secret War*, 1978).

Reginald Victor Jones was born in London and educated at Alleyn's School, Dulwich. He went to Oxford as an exhibitioner at Wadham and graduated with first class honours in physics. Next he carried out research on infra-red radiation under the supervision of Professor F. A. Lindemann (later Lord Cherwell and Churchill's chief scientific adviser); for this he was awarded his DPhil in 1934. Thereafter he held a senior studentship in astronomy at Balliol and continued to work in the Clarendon Laboratory.

In 1935 Lindemann found out that Jones was trying to detect aircraft by the infra-red radiation from their engines. Lindemann and Churchill were at that time trying to persuade those in power that air defence was possible (although the Prime Minister, Baldwin, was convinced that "the bomber would always get through"). In 1936 Jones began work as a scientific officer for the Air Ministry. However, forces within the Air Ministry who were emotionally committed to radar thought (wrongly) that infra-red detection might be a successful rival to their own ideas. As a result, Jones was lent for a time to an Admiralty research establishment.

But by early 1939, when it became clear that British Intelligence knew far too little about the scientific side of the German war machine, it was decided to employ a scientist to see what could be done to improve matters. Offered the job, Jones at once saw its immense potential.

After the successful "bending of the beams" came year after year of astonishing success. Another masterly piece of analysis was Jones's discovery of the tactical and technical details of the German radar-controlled night-fighter defences and of the enemy's airborne radar. Much later in the war, Jones was responsible for analysing the flood of intelligence reports about the V1 and the V2. He established that there were in fact two quite different weapons (a fact which was not at first obvious) and he determined the characteristics of each (size of



R. V. Jones standing in front of a wartime German Würzburg air defence radar for the Yorkshire Television programme, *The Secret War of Dr Jones*, 1977

warhead and probable accuracy). Apart from these spectacular achievements, there were many others less well-known. As one of his section once remarked, "It's our job to prevent people fighting ghosts"; in other words, it was important to determine that the enemy were not about to take some particular step, and thus to prevent wasted allied defensive effort. It was always difficult to prove a

negative, but it was quite frequently done. Jones's brilliant success at Intelligence analysis depended on a combination of qualities. He saw that it was vital to his usefulness to build up his credibility, and so was very cautious in checking his conclusions as fully as possible before reporting them. His reports were models of clarity and frankness. (He was early amused to discover that one way to be quite

sure that a report would be read by everyone was to be ordered to withdraw it after distribution because some VIP disliked what it said.)

He also established particularly happy relations with those such as photo-reconnaissance pilots and agents who had to undertake hazardous missions at the request of Intelligence, as he did with members of the fighting services at

all levels. He and his colleagues told the suppliers of intelligence what to look for. This stimulated enthusiasm in those obtaining, as well as those engaged in, decoding or relatively monotonous tasks such as the interpretation of air photographs or prisoner interrogation.

Throughout most of the war years Jones held the post of Assistant Director of Intelligence (Science) at Air Ministry. He was appointed CBE in 1942. Astonishingly, when Lindemann recommended Jones for the CBE for his discovery of the beam-controlled bombing, he was told by the Establishment that Jones's rank and salary were insufficiently high for an award at that level; it did not take the "Prof" long to point out the proper remedy. At the end of the war Jones was appointed CB and awarded the US Medal for Merit and the US Medal for Freedom with Silver Palm.

In 1946 he was appointed Director of Scientific Intelligence at the Air Ministry. But at that moment the chair of Natural Philosophy at the University of Aberdeen became vacant and he was persuaded by a wartime colleague to apply for it. He was elected and was an immediate success with his students, many of whom were, at that time, ex-service personnel. He adopted with enthusiasm the Scottish tradition by which a professor frequently lectures to his first-year class. He was a superb lecturer, clear, interesting and amusing, with the necessary (though not intrusive) touch of showmanship.

He was instrumental in persuading the university to build a very fine new building for his department, and he served in due course as Dean of Science. He took an individual line in university policy, vigorously opposing the rapid expansion in student numbers since he felt that this would reduce academic standards. He also held the view that some of the new subjects lacked intellectual rigour. Although, or perhaps because, he made no secret of his lack of sympathy with many fashionable points of view, he retained the affection and respect of most (though not all) of his colleagues and students by his charm, his honesty and his warm sympathies. At Aberdeen in the postwar years Jones had to rebuild a research

school more or less from scratch. His main research interest was in carrying measurement to its fundamental limits, set by Brownian motion and noise. To do this he developed many delicate instruments, such as an optical lever to measure very small angles. He used these in a number of applications to torque measurement, radiation detection, non-deflection of light in a magnetic field and radiation pressure. With his colleague J. C. S. Richards, he improved capacitance micrometry to measure minute displacements.

They used this to make seismometers, a particularly accurate film-ter, and other instruments. Jones also initiated the growth of large crystals for optical, and subsequently, for laser purposes. He was a devoted experimental physicist, never happier than when working himself on apparatus or in the workshop that he had developed. All this work and his prewar work on infra-red radiation had been recognised by his election as a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1965. In 1994 he was appointed a Companion of Honour for his overall contribution to science over so many years. He served on many national scientific and technical committees and was twice recalled to head important strategic and intelligence investigations for the Ministry of Defence.

He had a profound interest in the history and philosophy of science, which led to his becoming chairman of the British Committee for the History of Science. For many years he edited the *Notes and Records of the Royal Society*. He was in great demand to lecture to learned societies on the history of science, and also to the Staff College on strategy and intelligence. He was an honorary member of the US Air Force.

When young, he had been devoted to practical joking, and he wrote a celebrated article on the theory of the subject. He was convivial and good company; his after-dinner performances on the mouth organ (of which he owned several of very different sizes) were skilful and hilarious.

His wife, Vera, whom he married in 1940, died in 1992. He is survived by a daughter and a son. Another daughter, Susan, who had been a former Miss Scotland, predeceased him.

PHILIP YEOMAN

Philip Yeoman, orthopaedic surgeon, died in Bath on November 29 aged 74. He was born on April 23, 1923.

BY THE time he arrived at the Bath and Wessex Orthopaedic Hospital in 1964, Philip Yeoman was already distinguished — first for his part in treating Sir Winston Churchill for a spinal fracture in 1960 and a hip fracture in 1962 and, secondly, as one of few experts on injuries of the brachial plexus, the nerve complex between the shoulder and neck. He was to achieve international recognition partly for pioneering novel surgery for these injuries, commonly suffered by motorcyclists, but also for operative correction of rigid, spinal deformities

caused by ankylosing spondylitis, an arthritic scourge of young men.

Such surgery required mastery of anatomical detail allied to sang-froid which, happily, Yeoman possessed in large measure. A rapid but accurate surgeon, he achieved notable results in restoring the physical independence of such disabled patients. However, his expertise covered a broader orthopaedic field, prompting wide demand for his opinion by colleagues and patients alike. He was a surgeons' surgeon.

From Sedburgh School, Philip Metcalfe Yeoman moved in 1941 to Emmanuel College, Cambridge, to study medicine. During clinical training at University College Hospital, London, he joined a medical relief team sent to the



newly liberated concentration camp at Belsen in 1945; this scarring encounter with death and disease left its mark. After qualifying in 1947 and taking up junior house ap-

pointments and an anatomy demonstratorship, he did his National Service as a medical officer with the RAF. Developing an interest in orthopaedic surgery, he became FRCS in 1957.

At the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital he was senior registrar to Professor Herbert Seddon, the doyen of dealers with peripheral nerve injuries and locomotor paralysis. Encouraged to study brachial plexus injuries, often the source of useless insensitive arms and obligatory amputation, he refined investigative techniques to determine a more accurate prognosis which identified patients who might benefit from surgery. This research gained him an MD in 1963, the Robert Jones gold medal and an American travelling fellowship of the

British Orthopaedic Association in 1964.

Yeoman's appointment as consultant orthopaedic surgeon to the Bath and Wessex Orthopaedic Hospital in 1964 came at a time when its services had been hit hard by the premature deaths of two consultants. Largely by his expertise and energy, the orthopaedic unit was rejuvenated and became a Mecca for talented surgical trainees.

With the co-operation of physicians at the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases, in Bath, Yeoman promoted special clinics to rationalise the surgical management of severe rheumatoid arthritis. The bonus for patient care was substantial and stimulated numerous conferences, papers, book chapters and ultimately a textbook, *Orthopaedic Practice*, co-edited by Yeoman. At the Royal Society of Medicine, he served as president of the orthopaedic section in 1983.

Accepting a growing burden of administration, he was elected to the Council of the British Orthopaedic Association, becoming vice-president for 1984-85. An examiner and Hunterian Professor at the Royal College of Surgeons of England, he was the first Bath surgeon elected to its council, continuing to serve after retiring from the NHS in 1988. When opportunity presented, he enjoyed gardening, painting and golf. The recurrence of prostatic carcinoma this year gradually reduced his activities, but not his spirit or mental acuity.

In 1947 he married a state registered nurse, Ildona Scarrott. His wife, two sons and daughter survive him.

HAIG C. GALUSTIAN

Haig C. Galustian, businessman, died on December 9 aged 89. He was born on December 21, 1907.

SPORTSMAN, political exile, business leader and even restaurateur, Haig Galustian was, above all, one of those invaluable men whose life formed an active link between Britain and countries overseas: in his case, Armenia and Iran.

Born as an Armenian (and thus Christian) Iranian, Haig Caro Galustian was a descendant of that colony of industrious Armenians brought in during the 17th century by the Safavid Shah Abbas from the Caucasus to Julfa on the outskirts of his capital, Isfahan. Tall and athletic, he played for the Iranian national football team in the 1930s against Russian visiting national sides.

Galustian's first contacts with the British came during the Second World War. Iran was at that time occupied by the Allies and served as a land bridge for the supply of military equipment to the Russians. Galustian acted as a liaison officer with the United Kingdom Commercial Corporation (UKCC). It was his function to ensure an even distribution of commodities, such as wheat and kerosene, throughout the British zone of occupation in southern and eastern Iran.

Friendships made at the time with British officers of the UKCC proved helpful to Galustian. They enabled him to travel to Britain soon after the war and to begin his business career by buying up surplus British army supplies.



Such items as boots and blankets then commanded a high premium in Iran, which was still far from becoming even a semi-industrialised economy.

In 1946 Galustian became an agent for several British engineering companies. Among these were Sir Alexander Gibbs & Partners, for whom he helped to secure a most important contract for the supply of fresh piped water for the city of Tehran.

Other companies for whom he acted were Vickers Armstrong, Scottish Aviation, Stanton and Staveley (who made large diameter pipes for the oil industry). Avery Hardoll (petrol pumps), Marconi and Rolls-Royce.

Politics now intervened, however. In 1951 Mossadeq surged to power on a wave of nationalism. In a bid to rid Iran of British influences, he expelled Galustian who, he alleged, had "drunk too deeply of Thames water".

Thus Galustian and his family came to settle down in Wimbledon. He proceeded to

open an office in Kensington, near the Church of St Sarkis, which had been endowed by Calouste Gulbenkian in 1923.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, and now a British citizen, Galustian was a leading figure in the export of British engineering goods to Iran, as well representing Iran Air in London. He also started a club to popularise Iranian food. That celebrated gastronomic, André L. Simon, records enjoying one of his "Memorable Meals".

The advent of the Iranian Islamic revolution in 1979 meant that neither Haig Galustian nor his son and partner, Richard, chose to continue making business journeys to Iran. But, happily, the end of the Soviet empire allowed them to visit Armenia, while Galustian remained a most generous supporter of the Armenian community and its charities.

His devoted wife died young, leaving him to bring up their three small children. He is survived by two sons and a daughter.

PERSONAL COLUMN

FLIGHTS DIRECTORY

Jetworld
CHEAPEST PRICES AVAILABLE
01273 237877

Jetline
0171 663 4425

Delta Worldwide
0161 232 8435

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RUKBA
0171 715 7770

AIRLINK
0171 715 7770

Flight Seekers
0171 663 4425

TRIX & BUNYIP
TOGETHER FOR EVER
1912/1997

COURT & SOCIAL
FORTECOMING MARRIAGES AND MARRIAGES
0171 782 7347

CHILDREN ON DIALYSIS
0171 481 4000

BUY IT THROUGH THE SUNDAY TIMES
CLASSIFIED
0171 481 4000

"A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE"
0171 481 9313

FIRST GERMAN GAS ATTACK

SENTENCE ON AN EX-SOLDIER FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

BERLIN, DEC. 18 Sentence of 10 years' penal servitude was yesterday passed on the 41-year-old ex-soldier August Jäger, who has been standing his trial before the Supreme Court of the Reich at Leipzig on a charge of treason, in having betrayed to the French as a deserter the imminence of the first German poison-gas attack, the brunt of which fell on French and Canadian troops.

Jäger, on whom suspicion had previously fallen through statements contained in a captured French diary, was once tried and acquitted for lack of evidence in 1920. The renewal of the charge nearly 18 years after the event (in another two years it would have lapsed under the Statute of Limitations) arose from the publication in 1930 of an article by the French general commanding on the sector involved, in which "a German deserter, August Jäger, was named as having told the French what impended. Incidentally, the whole burden of General Ferry's article was that the French command had not taken

ON THIS DAY

December 19, 1932

Many years after the end of the First World War, a former German soldier was sentenced to 10 years' penal servitude for treason in having betrayed to the French the forthcoming German poison gas attack in 1915.

adequate counter-measures against the gas which was in the event released on April 22 instead of April 15 (the night of Jäger's capture); but the representative of the German Ministry of Defence maintained that the panic and shock effect of the first gas attack had been weakened by its betrayal. The Public Prosecutor had demanded 14 years' penal servitude for Jäger (who has already served a year in prison), stating that he refrained from demanding the death penalty because material injury had demonstrably not been suffered by the German army. The Court, in passing sentence, said it was reluctant to inflict 10 years' penal

servitude, the minimum, but was bound by the law. General Ferry's article had not influenced its decision, and the treachery with which he had not thrown away his anti-gas package (a primitive respirator served out to the German troops), although he had known that it would provoke questions, and that he had given information about its purpose. The only circumstance in alleviation was that the betrayal had had no injurious results for Germany.

THE LATE M. SANTOS DUMONT REBURIAL IN RIO THIS WEEK

Rio de Janeiro, Dec. 18 The body of M. Santos Dumont, after having lain in state in the crypt of the Cathedral of São Paulo for two days, was brought here by train.

On its arrival this morning it was met by an escort of military and naval aircraft which performed evolutions during its transit from the station to the Cathedral. The public will be admitted to pay their last respects to the Father of Aviation until Tuesday, when, with the full honours due to a Minister of State, his remains will finally be laid to rest in the cemetery of St. John the Baptist. A public holiday has been proclaimed for the day of the interment.

2

Safeway b

JPM

fined

price ri

General

starts

of Ham

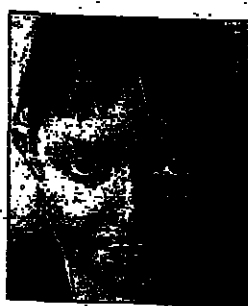
Three founder

group

THE TIMES

2

INSIDE
SECTION
2
TODAY



BUSINESS
Janet Bush gives
the Chancellor
a winter warning
PAGE 29



MEDIA
Richard Addis talks
about his two years
at the Express
PAGES 40-42



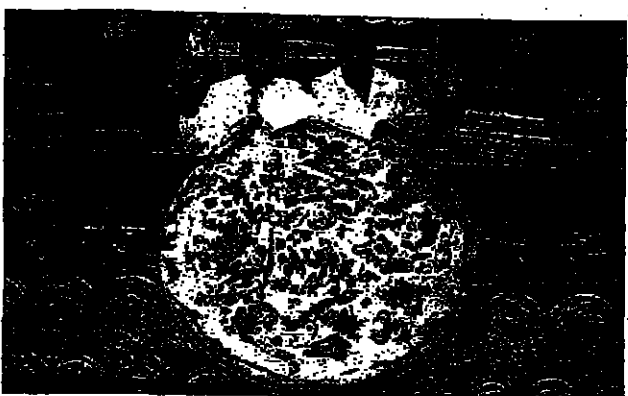
SPORT
Seizinger's winning
streak brings her
level with Killy
PAGES 43-48

**TELEVISION
AND
RADIO**
**PAGES
46, 47**

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

FRIDAY DECEMBER 19 1997

Safeway bid rumours fanciful, says Asda chairman



Big appetites: Archie Norman, left, and Allan Leighton

By CARL MORTIMER

ARCHIE NORMAN, chairman of Asda, poured cold water on suggestions that the food retailer was plotting a bid for Safeway. "A lot of this speculation is fanciful," he said yesterday and indicated that no contact had taken place with Safeway since the exploratory merger talks were called off in September.

Mr Norman's attempt to quell City rumours came as the company reported a surge in sales for the half year to November 15. Turnover grew 8.9 per cent, far outstripping its rivals, Tesco and Sainsbury. Profits before exceptional items were up 13.7 per cent to £190 million, including a £4.3 million contribution from Gazeley, Asda's property developing subsidiary.

City analysts were not entirely convinced by Mr Norman's comments on Safeway, noting that he had not completely ruled out the possibility of a bid. The food retail sector has been awash with rumours since Safeway approached Asda earlier this year to discuss the competition issues of the two companies coming together. Each group has about 11 per cent of the UK food retailing market and the addition of Safeway would provide Asda with better coverage in the South East.

Asda, whose chief executive is Allan Leighton, increased market share by a full percentage point to 11.6 per cent. Much of the growth came from hypermarkets, which now total 15 and which showed sales growth of 36 per cent. Mr Norman said the number of hypermarkets could double over the next two years. Capital expenditure for the full year is expected to be £490 million.

Asda's balance sheet gearing remains about 10 per cent but Mr Norman said the company had no plans to give capital back to shareholders. "I don't want to return capital and then go back to shareholders with a rights issue," he said. "A capital repayment in a year or two's time, that is a possibility."

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKETS

FTSE 100	5168.2	(-22.5)
Yield	3.15%	
FTSE All share	2417.28	(-9.78)
Nikkei	16161.54	(-378.42)
New York		
Dow Jones	7926.57	(-30.94)
S&P Composite	962.06	(-3.48)

US RATE

Federal Funds	5 1/8%	(5 1/8%)
Long Bond	10 1/2%	(10 1/2%)
Yield	5.97%	(6.01%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth Interbank	7 1/4%	(7 1/4%)
Life long gilt	12 1/4%	(12 1/4%)

STERLING

New York	1.6637*	(1.6510)
London		
DM	1.6607	(1.6480)
FF	2.9436	(2.9163)
FR	2.2534	(2.2477)
SP	2.3852	(2.3839)
Yen	213.20	(208.53)
E Index	104.1	(103.1)

\$\$\$ \$ DOLLAR

London		
DM	1.7765*	(1.7737)
FF	5.9460*	(5.9400)
SP	1.4399*	(1.4397)
Yen	128.55*	(127.08)
\$ Index	107.9	(107.6)

Tokyo close Yen 127.35

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day Mar	\$17.70	(\$17.50)
------------------	---------	-----------

Gold

London close	\$288.75	(\$287.05)
--------------	----------	------------

Slowdown

Mortgage lending growth slowed rapidly in November, providing firm evidence that the five interest rate rises since the general election are beginning to take the heat out of the housing market. **Page 26**

Plummet

Shares in Ferguson International fell from 130p to 91 1/2p yesterday after the third profit warning from the paper and packaging group in six months and news that it will not pay a final dividend for the year to February 1998. **Page 27**

J P Morgan fined over price rigging

By MICHAEL CLARK, STOCK MARKET CORRESPONDENT

THE London Stock Exchange (LSE) has imposed a £350,000 fine on JP Morgan, the US investment bank, after two traders attempted to manipulate the market in order to achieve a profit. The traders, who were suspended after the incident last month, have now been dismissed by JP Morgan.

The fine is the first to be levied by the Exchange since 1995 and underlines the authority's determination to stamp out the practice of market manipulation. The last fine to be levied was for £150,000, against J & E Davy, the Irish broker.

In conjunction with its latest action, the Exchange has moved quickly to prevent further attempts at market manipulation, by beefing up the rules covering this area. Rule 2.10 originally precluded members from trading in a security that is a component of any index from engaging in any action designed to move the actual index. This rule has now been widened to cover trading undertaken with the intention of moving the reference price of securities, or the level of an index.

The incident came to light on November 28, the day after the Thanksgiving Day holiday in the US, when the FTSE 100 Index suffered a marked fall of 38 points, during the last few minutes of trading. It later transpired that the two JP Morgan traders had gone into the market with the intention of selling small amounts of several leading shares, including SmithKline Beecham and Glaxo Wellcome, at artificially low prices. At the same time, they had sold baskets of FTSE options, moves that were also designed to depress the index.

The traders' actions succeeded in dragging the underlying securities, and the index, down. This needed to be achieved so that the traders could close down over-the-counter hedge options. The trigger for this exercise was the closing level of the index. The lower the index, the more profit they made for their clients.

Their actions were made possible by the introduction by the LSE of its Sets computerised trading system, designed to match buyers with sellers automatically. Sets was designed to narrow the spread between bid and offer by increasing the flow of volume in equities through the market. This would increase price competitiveness, thereby narrowing the spread and providing cheaper prices for investors. The system was plagued by teething troubles and cold-shouldered by many brokers disgruntled by the absence of a central settlement system for all transactions. As a result, the volume of shares traded dropped dramatically, providing increased volatility in share prices.

The LSE has taken steps to rectify the shortcomings of Sets but has failed to convince agency brokers of its benefits. Peter Clowes, former head of the Barlow Clowes investment empire, appeared before magistrates in Macclesfield, Cheshire, yesterday, charged with benefits fraud. Mr Clowes, 55, of Stockport, Greater Manchester, denies two charges of false accounting relating to the submission of jobsucker's allowances forms in November last year. He was remanded on unconditional bail to appear before the court again on January 8.

Mr Clowes, former head of the Barlow Clowes investment empire, appeared before magistrates in Macclesfield, Cheshire, yesterday, charged with benefits fraud. Mr Clowes, 55, of Stockport, Greater Manchester, denies two charges of false accounting relating to the submission of jobsucker's allowances forms in November last year. He was remanded on unconditional bail to appear before the court again on January 8.

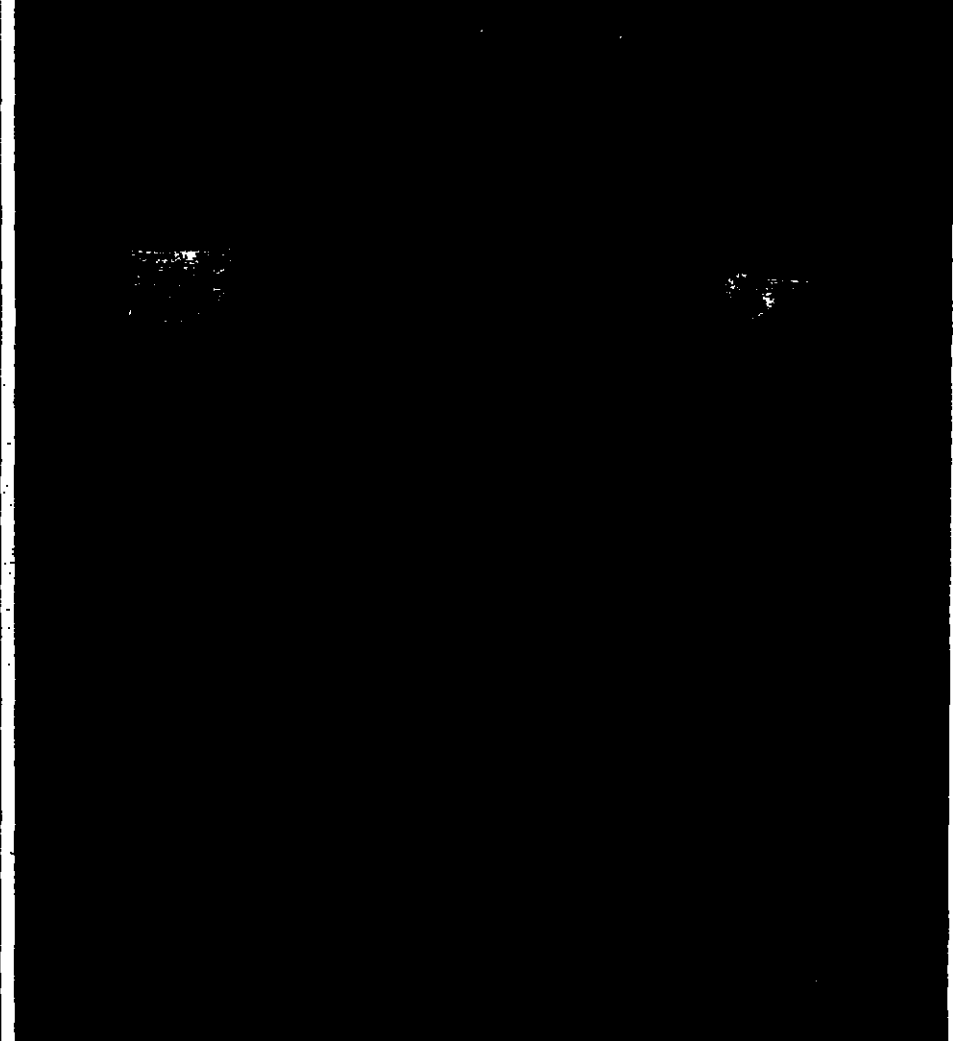
Generale deal starts break-up of Hambros

By JASON NISSE

THE sale of the merchant banking side of Hambros for as much as £200 million could be announced in the next few weeks following the purchase of much of its corporate loan book by Generale Bank of Belgium for £30 million. Generale is taking a portfolio of loans to 400 clients as well as 37 staff in the deal. Societe Generale, the French bank which recently hired Nicola Horlick, to head its fund management side, and Investec, the South African finance group which is strengthening its presence in the UK, are leading the fight for Hambros Bank.

Senior sources say the deal could be completed within days, though it is most likely not to emerge until after the new year. The deal will leave Hambros as a holding company for the group's 52 per cent stakes in Hambro Countrywide, the estate agency chain, and Hambros Insurance Services, as well as its 43 per cent holding in Hambros Guinness Flight, the fund manager.

The management, led by Sir Chips Keswick, is expected to then break up the group, returning shares and cash to investors in the most tax-efficient way possible. In recent months Hambros has been wracked with scandal, largely because of its work for Andrew Regan, the young entrepreneur who attempted to put together a £1.2 billion bid for the Co-operative Wholesale Society. Revelations about the use of the confidential Co-op documents by the bid team led to the resignations of three Hambros directors, including its head of corporate finance, Nigel Pantling. However, the bank still has a highly regarded private banking operation as well as a specialist bond dealing business. **Commentary, page 27**



Peter Clowes on his way yesterday to appear before magistrates in Macclesfield

Three founders of Levis ad group pocket £30m

By CHRIS AYRES

THE AGENCY responsible for creating the Levis jeans advertisements has been partly sold to a private US company, making an estimated £30 million for its three founders. The deal, which has been in negotiations for about 8 months, will see up to 49 per cent of Bartle Bogle Hegarty sold to Leo Burnett, the advertising network. BBH is well known for the Levis advertisements, which have made one of the world's most famous jeans a household name. The deal was announced yesterday, but the exact figure paid by Burnett for the agency was not disclosed. "It's not a million miles away," Mr Bartle said that although the leading shareholders in BBH were its three founders — himself, Nigel Bogle and John Hegarty — about 40 other staff would benefit. The deal is likely to help BBH win the £48 million Levis account in the US. The Soho-based agency currently works for the jeans company in Europe and Asia.

Mr Bartle said that although the leading shareholders in BBH were its three founders — himself, Nigel Bogle and John Hegarty — about 40 other staff would benefit. The deal is likely to help BBH win the £48 million Levis account in the US. The Soho-based agency currently works for the jeans company in Europe and Asia.

Mr Bartle said that although the leading shareholders in BBH were its three founders — himself, Nigel Bogle and John Hegarty — about 40 other staff would benefit. The deal is likely to help BBH win the £48 million Levis account in the US. The Soho-based agency currently works for the jeans company in Europe and Asia.

Boeing production lines out of control, says FAA

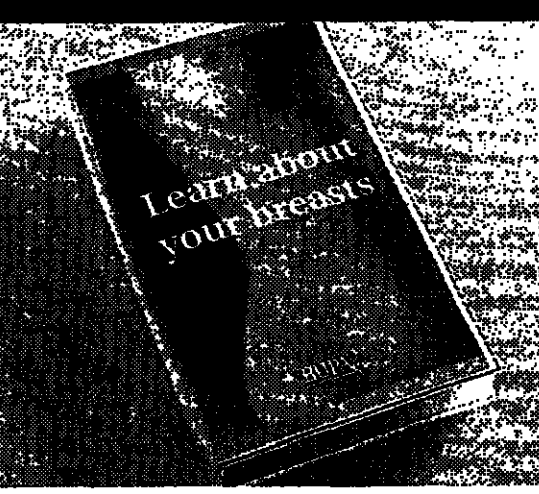
FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

BOEING, the manufacturer of the majority of the world's civil aircraft, was warned by the Federal Aviation Authority, the US safety regulator, that its production lines were "out of control". FAA inspectors have repeatedly written to Boeing over the past few months to complain that it was leaving too little time for safety checks. Boeing is currently expanding its production facilities after an order surge and the merger with McDonnell Douglas. In October it had to stop production of its 737 and 747

planes after experiencing a string of problems. It now appears that the safety concerns were one of the reasons for the shutdown. At the time, the group was blaming shortage of labour and parts. Boeing did not deny the FAA warnings, but played down their significance. A spokesman said: "The FAA is a really important part of our checks and balances system. We have not received any indication from the FAA that they are going to take any extraordinary measures."

An FAA inspector said in a memo that the rapid production increases "have created an environment that is out of control and the FAA cannot continue to support it." Boeing's inspection procedure was said to be "flawed" and the FAA was given "insufficient time" to test new designs. Boeing experienced similar problems during an order surge in the 1980s. The group hired an extra 17,000 people this year and said it will take a total \$2.6 billion charge this year and next to pay for the delays.

FIFTEEN MINUTES
THAT COULD ADD
YEARS TO YOUR LIFE.



When you call or return your coupon we will send you a FREE video that will help you to learn to examine your breasts yourself. Breast cancer is one of the UK's biggest causes of death in women with as many as one in 12 developing it. BUPA Breast Screening is carried out by highly skilled mammography experts who probably know more about the subtle differences between healthy and unhealthy breasts than anyone else. It is open to all women and only costs £85.

For further information, or to make an appointment, phone 0800 616 029 quoting BUPA 9X, or complete the coupon below.

*Available to women aged 40+

Please post to BUPA Health Screening, FREEPOST, London WC1X 8BB. You don't even need a stamp. Reference BUPA 9X

Name (Mr/Ms/Miss/Ms) _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Tel (Day) _____ (Even) _____

You're amazing. We want you to stay that way.

BUPA Health Screening

US seeks \$1m a day fine on Microsoft

FROM OLIVER AUGUST
IN NEW YORK

THE US Justice Department has stepped up its fight against Microsoft's monopoly position in the computer sector. It has asked a federal judge to rule the software house in contempt of last week's court order forcing it to sell its Internet software separately from its Windows 95 operating system.

The department also asked to have a \$1 million (£598,000) per day fine imposed from the end of next week. In its latest trust-busting move, it alleged that marketing changes made by Microsoft were designed to sabotage the court ruling.

Microsoft was ordered to discontinue sales and marketing of Windows 95 and its Internet Explorer to prevent it from dominating the Internet market. In response to this, Microsoft, which is headed by Bill Gates, is said to now force computer-makers to install versions of Windows 95 that do not incorporate Internet Explorer.

Joel Klein, the assistant attorney-general for anti-trust, said: "Microsoft has gone from trying its products to tying the hands of its vendors. The more Microsoft continues its practices, the more consumers are harmed."

The group said it did not recognise the Justice Department's case. The new call for the imposition of the fine marks a deterioration of relations between the group and the Government. Officials from several US states are said to have met in secret to discuss a suit based on the Justice Department case. Japan is also said to have begun to investigate Microsoft's market position.



Bill Gates faces the prospect of a federal judge ruling Microsoft in contempt of a court order forcing it to sell its Internet software as a separate item

Housing market starts to feel the effects of interest rate rises

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

MORTGAGE lending growth slowed rapidly in November, providing firm evidence that the five interest rate rises since the election are beginning to take the heat out of the housing market.

Figures released by the Buildings Societies Association showed mortgage lending falling 12 per cent in November, while separate British Bankers Association data also pointed to a slow-

down. Signs of a slowdown in the housing market were also supported up by the latest housing price forecasts, which predict that growth is likely to be at around half the levels seen this year.

The Council of Mortgage Lenders said it expected house prices to rise by 5 to 6 per cent next year, although the number of transactions will also increase to 1.5 million.

Abbey National said it expected a period of "consolidation" in the market next year, with house price growth

moderating from 9 per cent this year to 5 per cent in 1998.

The BSA said building society gross advances fell from £1.85 billion in October to £1.65 billion. Net advances also slipped from £985 million to £825 million, while approvals declined from £1.67 billion to £1.54 billion.

Savings data, however, was surprisingly strong in a month when consumers normally increase withdrawals in the run-up to Christmas. Savings inflows totalled £665 million — the largest November figure

since 1988.

Adrian Coles, director-general of the BSA, said: "It appears there has been a slight cooling in the housing market recovery. This is likely to be a direct result of the five interest rate increases since the general election."

The BBA data also showed mortgage lending growth decreasing from £782 million to £690 million. Consumer credit slowed slightly from £536 to £526 million leaving total personal borrowing at £1.22 billion, down from £1.32 billion.

Total lending, however, increased by £4.68 billion.

M4, the measure of broad money supply, also fell back in November, annual growth slipping to 10.5 per cent (10.7 per cent). Simon Briscoe, director of research at Nikko Europe, said: "There has now been a flux of data indications that economic activity is no longer accelerating."

But economists also said that the Bank of England probably wants a further declaration in the rate of M4, before ruling out further interest rate changes.

Consolidated code for Stock Exchange

BY GRAHAM SEARJEANT, FINANCIAL EDITOR

THE London Stock Exchange hopes to replace the Cadbury code rules on corporate governance next year. It will be superseded by a new consolidated code taking in revised versions of Cadbury and the recommendations of Sir Richard Greenbury's report on disclosure of executive pay.

At present, however, the Stock Exchange has no plans to enforce the new code. Like the Cadbury code, which covered such things as non-executive directors and audit committees, it will be appended to the exchange's listing rules and "sit alongside" them without being part of them. Quoted companies will be obliged to dis-

close in their annual reports how and whether they comply with the code's requirements. If they do not, they should also explain and justify how and why they have not complied.

The code will be the centrepiece of the final report of a committee headed by Sir Ronald Hampel, chairman of ICI, to review the earlier codes. The Hampel committee is due to report in January. Its proposed code will then be sent out for detailed consultation before replacing the Cadbury code.

Sir Ronald's committee will only be reconvened if basic objections emerge.

Commentary, page 27

LMS wins permission for terminal

LONDON Merchant Securities, the property group, has won outline planning permission to build a cruise liner terminal, a hotel, a luxury block of flats and a cinema on an eight-acre site at Greenwich near the Millennium Dome.

The group is now working on detailed planning permission.

LMS yesterday reported a £69 million (£15 million) pre-tax profit for the six months to September 30, helped by a previously reported £5.9 million exceptional gain.

The ordinary half-year dividend rises from 0.8p to 0.9p. Total earnings rose from 4.05p to 28.29p.

Kodak plans to cut further 6,000 jobs

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

UNCERTAINTY over thousands of jobs at Kodak in the UK increased yesterday when the US photographic company added 6,000 to the 10,000 job cuts it announced last month. These come on top of existing programmes, taking the full cut of staff worldwide to 19,900 out of a 100,500 workforce.

Kodak employs 5,500 in the UK — mainly at manufacturing sites at Harrow, near London, Annesley in Nottinghamshire and Kirkby, near Liverpool. A spokeswoman said the company had "no details about what is happening in the UK".

Kodak is to take a \$1.5 billion (£900 million) charge to

fund the restructuring of its worldwide operations. Half of the cash will go on payments for those who lose their jobs; the other half will go on writing down assets and on efforts to reposition some of its businesses. Kodak is aiming to reduce costs by at least \$1 billion (£600 million).

The company said that 9,400 jobs would be lost in manufacturing while 10,500 would go from administration, selling, service and photofinishing. Kodak UK said all operations were working on business plans for the company. These will form the basis of job reductions to be phased over the next two years.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Equitas takes over Lioncover liabilities

LIONCOVER INSURANCE, formed in 1987 to take on millions of pounds in liabilities from the PCW syndicates, has seen its liabilities transferred to Equitas, the company set up to reinsure and run-off 1992 and prior year losses at Lloyd's. The move, originally scheduled as part of last year's reconstruction and renewal programme, was blocked at the last minute by the Department of Trade and Industry. Lioncover was locked in various disputes at the time, which were largely resolved this year, and the DTI felt its trading position was far from clear.

Some 2,886 names on the PCW syndicates were hit by £135 million of losses after a series of irregularities by PCW's agency directors, Peter Cameron-Webb and Peter Dixon. Lloyd's contributed £40 million to the PCW rescue and committed further funds from the central fund. By the end of 1996, losses born by the central fund had risen to £487 million. Equitas will assume full operational control of the run-off of Lioncover's liabilities. The premium for reinsuring the liabilities is £601 million.

Allied Colloids hits back

ALLIED COLLOIDS has accused Hercules, the American group bidding £1.1 billion, of using "thoroughly misleading arguments" in its attempt to win control of the chemicals company. Colloids said Hercules had resorted to inappropriate comparisons in an effort to portray its results as mediocre. It said its performance had significantly improved, that the fall in return on capital was because of investment in manufacturing, and that the US acquisition of CPS had brought major benefits.

CAT wins drug rights

CAMBRIDGE ANTIBODY TECHNOLOGY has gained the right to develop treatments for six more disease targets as part of an agreement with Icos Corporation, a Nasdaq-listed drug development company. Icos will contribute some intellectual property and will draw on CAT's expertise in antibody engineering. Separately, Icos will pay CAT for its help in developing two further undisclosed targets. CAT said this may lead to it receiving milestone payments and royalties.

Belhaven encouraged

BELHAVEN BREWERY raised pre-tax profits to £2.8 million, from £2.1 million, in the six months to September 30. Earnings rose from 7.8p to 9.7p and the half-year dividend rises from 1.9p to 2.1p. The group said that trading since September had seen a continuation of the positive trends in the first half of the year. It said that the results for the second half will be materially influenced by trading conditions during the festive season, adding that early sales have been encouraging.

Watmoughs attacks bid

WATMOUGHS, the printing group under fire from a £188 million bid by Quebecor, launched its defence campaign yesterday with a claim that its problems were behind it. Sir Derek Birkin, the chairman, said Watmoughs "is well positioned to generate increasing value for shareholders as an independent company". He added that the Quebecor offer "fundamentally undervalues" Watmoughs, shares in which fell 1½p to 270p yesterday, against the 257p bid price.

Warner Estate rises

WARNER ESTATE shares rose from 237½p to 247½p after the group raised pre-tax profits to £12.25 million (£10.1 million) and its net asset value to 308p (299p) a share. Earnings rose to 19.15p (18.92p), out of which a final dividend of 8.75p will be paid, taking the total for the year to 12.9p (12.2p). Reverses receivable rose 12.9 per cent to £15.7 million. Philip Warner, chairman, said: "I am confident that the company's strategy of diversification will continue to provide good returns in the coming year."

Dragon sells US asset

DRAGON OIL has sold its remaining American offshore oil and gas-producing assets for \$2.5 million (£1.49 million). Completion is expected shortly with an effective date of September 1, 1997. The assets, West Cameron 368 and Ship Shoal 222/225 offshore in the Gulf of Mexico, had attributable net reserves at the end of 1996 of about 400,000 barrels of oil equivalent. This compares with Dragon's estimated proven and probable reserves of more than 250 million barrels.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia \$	2.61	2.64
Austria S	21.97	22.01
Belgium Fr	63.82	58.86
Canada C	2.68	2.67
Cyprus L	0.598	0.594
Denmark Kr	11.78	10.83
Finland Mk	227.23	18.67
France F	10.3	9.53
Germany DM	3.10	2.85
Greece Dr	488	450
Hong Kong \$	13.67	12.47
Iceland L	130	110
Ireland Pt	1.19	1.10
Italy Lira	6.24	5.58
Japan Yen	227.23	208.81
Malta	0.680	0.681
Netherlands Gld	3.502	3.207
New Zealand \$	2.27	2.73
Norway Kr	12.61	11.67
Portugal Esc	313.03	291.90
S Korea Ri	8.76	7.90
Spain Pta	280.29	241.50
Sweden Kr	13.88	1.58
Switzerland Fr	2.20	2.31
Turkey Lira	340451	320373
USA \$	1.794	1.821

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

Recommended Offer

by
Merrill Lynch International
and
Deutsche Morgan Grenfell

on behalf of
Yule Catto & Co plc

(Incorporated in England and Wales, number 98381)

to acquire the whole of the issued share capital of
Holliday Chemical Holdings PLC

Merrill Lynch International ("Merrill Lynch") and Morgan Grenfell & Co. Limited ("Deutsche Morgan Grenfell") announce on behalf of Yule Catto & Co plc ("Yule Catto") that, by means of a formal offer document (the "Offer Document") dated and posted on 18 December 1997 and this advertisement, Merrill Lynch and Deutsche Morgan Grenfell are making an offer on behalf of Yule Catto to acquire all of the shares in Holliday Chemical Holdings PLC ("Holliday"). The full terms and conditions of the Offer (including details of the procedure for acceptance of the Offer) are set out in the Offer Document. Terms defined in the Listing Particulars dated 18 December 1997 in connection with the Offer have the same meanings in this advertisement. Merrill Lynch is also broker to Yule Catto and broker to the Offer.

A person who accepts the Offer will receive for each Holliday Share 105.3p in cash and 0.45 New Yule Catto Ordinary Shares.

Accepting Holliday Shareholders may elect under the Mix and Match Election, subject to availability, to vary the proportions in which they receive New Yule Catto Ordinary Shares and cash in respect of their holdings of Holliday Shares. To the extent that elections can be satisfied, Holliday Shareholders will receive New Yule Catto Ordinary Shares instead of cash and vice versa on the basis of a price of 306.5p per New Yule Catto Ordinary Share. Accepting Holliday Shareholders may also elect to receive £1 nominal of Guaranteed Loan Notes for every £1 of cash consideration which would otherwise be receivable by them under the basic Offer. The Guaranteed Loan Notes will be transferable but no application will be made for them to be listed or dealt on any stock exchange.

Irrevocable undertakings to accept the Offer have been given by Holliday directors in respect of shares representing, in aggregate, 18.0 per cent. of Holliday's issued share capital (including shares representing 17.7 per cent. of Holliday's issued share capital in respect of Dr. Michael Pegg's own beneficial interests and those of the trustees of a family trust owned by him). These irrevocable undertakings would cease to be binding if, later still, a person other than Yule Catto (or a subsidiary of Yule Catto) makes an offer for Holliday and announces acceptance of such offer amounting to not less than 32 per cent. of the issued share capital of Holliday.

The Offer is, by means of this advertisement, extended to all persons to whom the Offer Document may not be despatched and who hold, or who are entitled to have allotted to them, Holliday Shares. Such persons are informed that copies of the Offer Document, the Form of Acceptance and the Listing Particulars, which relate to the New Yule Catto Ordinary Shares to be issued in connection with the Offer, are available for collection from The Royal Bank of Scotland plc, Registrars' Department, New Issues Section, P.O. Box 633, 5-10 Great Tower Street, London EC3R 5ER.

The Offer will initially be open for acceptance until 3.00 p.m. on 8 January 1998.

The Offer is not being made, directly or indirectly, in or into the United States, Canada, Australia or Japan and none of the Offer Document, the Form of Acceptance or the Listing Particulars is being or may be mailed or otherwise distributed or sent in or into the United States, Canada, Australia or Japan. Further details relating to overseas Holliday Shareholders are set out at Appendix 1 to the Offer Document.

Neither the New Yule Catto Ordinary Shares nor the Guaranteed Loan Notes to be issued pursuant to the Offer have been, or will be, registered under the United States Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or under any relevant securities laws of any state or other jurisdiction of the United States or of Canada, Australia or Japan. Accordingly, unless an exemption under such Act or other laws is available, the New Yule Catto Ordinary Shares and the Guaranteed Loan Notes may not be offered, sold or delivered, directly or indirectly, in or into the United States, Canada, Australia or Japan.

This advertisement is not being published or otherwise distributed or sent in or into the United States, Canada, Australia or Japan. All persons reading this advertisement (including nominees, trustees and custodians) who would, or otherwise intend to, forward this advertisement, the Offer Document, the Form of Acceptance, the Listing Particulars or any related documents must not distribute or send them in, into or from the United States, Canada, Australia or Japan, and doing so may render invalid any related purported acceptance of the Offer.

The contents of this advertisement, which have been prepared by and are the sole responsibility of Yule Catto, have been approved by Merrill Lynch and Deutsche Morgan Grenfell (both regulated by The Securities and Futures Authority Limited) for the purposes of Section 57 of the Financial Services Act 1986.

Merrill Lynch and Deutsche Morgan Grenfell are acting for Yule Catto and for no one else in connection with the Offer and will not be responsible to anyone other than Yule Catto for providing the protections afforded to customers of Merrill Lynch and Deutsche Morgan Grenfell or for giving advice in relation to the Offer.

The Directors of Yule Catto accept responsibility for the information contained in this advertisement. To the best of their knowledge and belief (having taken all reasonable care to ensure that such is the case), the information contained in this advertisement is in accordance with the facts and does not omit anything likely to affect the import of such information.

19 December 1997



DIANA, PRINCESS OF WALES - TRIBUTE

QUEEN - GEORGE MICHAEL - ANNE LENOX
RINEAD O'DONOHUE - PASSENGERS - PHAROSITY - BRYAN FERRY - PAUL McCARTNEY - ERIC CLAPTON - R.E.M.
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN - NEIL YOUNG - THE PRETENDERS - ROD STEWART - PETER DINKEL - ENYA - BARBRA STREISAND
RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS - ARETHA FRANKLIN - PUFF DUDDY - CELINE DION - MICHAEL JACKSON - WHITNEY HOUSTON
DEEN CEE - MARIAN CARRY - SEAL - DIANA ROSS - BEE GEES - TONY BRAXTON with KENNY G - TINA TURNER
CLIFF RICHARD - SPICE GIRLS - GLORIA ESTEFAN - SHARPLY RED - MICHAEL BOLTON / PLACIDO DOMINGO
LESLEY GARRITT - CHUCKEN SHED

DOUBLE COMPACT DISC - DOUBLE CASSETTE - DOUBLE MINIDISC

PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF THIS ALBUM GO DIRECTLY TO THE DIANA, PRINCESS OF WALES MEMORIAL FUND
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 2464230 - <http://www.dianamemorialfund.com>

STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Stock Market Writer of the Year

Takeover talk fails to stop share prices sliding

INVESTORS spent a roller-coaster session with share prices closing lower on the day after failing to hold on to early gains. As if mimicking the Grand Old Duke of York, the FTSE 100 index raced almost 30 points higher in early trading fuelled by fresh takeover speculation that also succeeded in confounding the experts.

But the absence of any real commitment on the part of institutional investors meant that the advance was never likely to be consolidated. This proved to be the case with prices coming off quickly ahead of the start of trading on Wall Street where the Dow Jones industrial average opened sharply lower.

However, the FTSE index managed to close above its low for the day. At one stage it was nursing a loss of 42.3 before rallying to finish 22.5 down at 5,103.3. Turnover was a healthy 1.04 billion shares. Brokers said much of this was generated by year-end book squaring by fund managers and the covering of short positions by traders ahead of today's expiry of the current Safeway managed to sport a rise of 7.5p at 330.5p despite the indication from rival Asda, up 7.5p at 178p, that it will not be reopening bid talks. Asda made its stance on the matter known after issuing half-year results at the top end of City expectations.

Asda has increased market share but continues to fall shy of its two biggest rivals, J Sainsbury, 1.5p firmer at 510p, and Tesco, 3p easier at 485p, who between them control more than 30 per cent of the grocery market.

Guardian Royal Exchange, up 16.5p at 340.5p, got the seal of approval from several brokers after its acquisition of PPP Healthcare this week. PPP Healthcare Read has upgraded its recommendation from "reduce" to "hold", while HSBC James Capel has been keen to reiterate its "long-term buy" recommendation.

Not everyone was impressed with this week's trading statement from Pearson. Merrill Lynch, the broker, has moved to downgrade its rating for the current year and the shares responded with a fall of 3.4p at 790p, making it the biggest fall among the top 100 companies.

Merrill says it remains a buyer of the stock. Earlier this week rival Smith Barney cut its profit forecast by almost 10 per cent to £320 million. Positive comments from at least two brokers were good news for Hays, the employment and logistics group, where the price advanced 23p to 635p. Henderson Crosthwaite has raised its profit forecast for the current year by £7 million to £187 million, while NatWest Markets has decided to reiterate its recommendation to clients to "add" to their holdings.

An early start to the festive season by one senior executive at Abbott Laboratories is believed to have prompted a 67.5p fall to 705p in Shield Diagnostics, which has developed a new technique for detecting coronary



Frank Bruno and waxwork model at Madame Tussauds, part of Pearson, which led falls in the top 100 companies

problems at an early stage. had been expected to sign a joint licensing agreement with the American group. But the absence of the key executive at Abbott means the deal has been put on the back burner until the new year.

Country Casuals has again been caught in the glare of the takeover spotlight. Lifting the shares 31p to 122.5p, Back in August its shares fell sharply after takeover talks with the group's former chief executive, Mark Bunce, were abandoned.

Dorling Kindersley to cut costs was rewarded with a rise of 9.5p to 216p. IMI benefited from a "buy" recommendation from Société Générale Strauss Turnbull with a rise of 12.5p at 408.5p. The broker has set a target price for the shares of 450p.

Positive news from Nestor Healthcare sent the shares racing away 16p to 932.5p. The group, which provides temporary healthcare workers, says that results for the second half will be above management expectations.

News of the proposed share buyback provided a rise of 1.5p to 102.5p at Penland Group. The footwear and leisure group is aiming to buy back 36 million shares.

Oasis Stores continued to reel from this week's profits warning with the price ending the session 7.5p down at 122.5p, stretching the deficit of the past two days to 63p.

GILT-EDGED: Bond prices continued to make headway, reflecting similar gains on other European bond markets in the wake of the Bundesbank's decision to peg interest rates.

A positive start to trading by US Treasury bonds on the back of a better performance by the dollar against the yen also provided added stimulus.

In the futures pit, the March series of the long gilt rose five ticks to £121.14 in thin trading. Among conventional issues, Treasury 9 per cent 2021 finished £1.15 better at £121.25, while at the shorter end Treasury 7 per cent 2002 put on a couple of ticks at £101.23.

NEW YORK: The Dow Jones industrial average slipped more than 50 points in morning trading, prompting a second round of New York Stock Exchange programme-trader cuts. The index was down 30.84 points to 7,926.57 at midday.

Closing Prices Page 30

RECENT ISSUES

Autologics 267.5
BCO Technologies 158.5
Bosch 120.5
Boys Homes 103.5
Capital Opps Tst 113.5
Comland Comm 54
Energis 266.5
Firm Geared US 179
Glenlake 285
Glenlake House 133.5
Manchester & Lon 270
Marchpole 116.5
Market Link Publ 55
Northern Recruit 138.5
Property Asset 7
Range Cooker Comp 94
Rapid Technology 4
Razorbak Vehicles 102.5
SCS Upholstery 111.5
Saatchi & Saatchi 113
Savoy Asset Mgmt 113
Seascope Shipping 252.5
Second Star 299
Second Scottish 103.5
Syntex 234
Terra 175.5
Vanguard Med Wts 43.5

FI Group n/p (640) 238.5
Taylor Niss n/p (50) 17.5

MAJOR CHANGES

RIBES: Danka Bc Sys 213p (+18.5p)
Pressac 307p (+12p)
Royalblue 280p (+10.5p)
Scot & New 785p (+27p)
BOC 987p (+32p)
Hays 839p (+25p)
Granada 921p (+20p)

FALLS: First Tech 273p (-12.5p)
Marta Spencer 574p (-6p)
ST 217p (-15p)
Scot & New 345p (-10p)
Com Union 873p (-25p)
French Conn 380p (-10p)
Argos 555p (-12p)
Northern Rock 548p (-11p)

COMMODITIES

ICE/LOR (London 6 barrel FOB)

CRUDE OILS (\$/barrel FOB)

Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

IFPE FUTURES (GNI LRI)

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 7926.57 (+30.84)
S&P Composite 902.06 (+3.48)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average 16161.64 (+370.42)
Hang Seng 10754.11 (+61.41)

Amsterdam:
AEX Index 907.53 (+7.23)

Sydney:
ASX 2583.10 (+1.00)

Frankfurt:
DAX 4166.24 (+7.56)

Singapore:
Straits 1991.41 (+21.00)

Brussels:
General 14307.15 (+40.20)

Paris:
CAC-40 2694.50 (+1.25)

Zurich:
SIX Gen 1243.20 (+1.40)

London:
FTSE 100 5103.3 (+22.5)
FTSE 250 4735.4 (+30.5)
FTSE 350 2477.4 (+10.8)
FTSE Europe 100 2674.7 (+4.7)
FTSE All-Share 2417.8 (+4.7)
FTSE Non-Financials 2418.2 (+4.3)
FTSE Financials 1335.8 (+1.3)
FTSE Govt Secs 101.45 (+0.12)
Bergsma 101.45 (+0.12)
SEAG Volume 101.45
US\$ 1.607 (+0.0150)
Sterling Mark 2.9434 (+0.0029)
Exchange Index 104.1 (+1.0)
Bank of England Official Rate (4pm) 4.75%
CEBR 1.4032
RPI 159.6 Nov (3.7%) Jan 1997-100
RPIX 158.0 Nov (2.8%) Jan 1997-100

RECENT ISSUES

Autologics 267.5
BCO Technologies 158.5
Bosch 120.5
Boys Homes 103.5
Capital Opps Tst 113.5
Comland Comm 54
Energis 266.5
Firm Geared US 179
Glenlake 285
Glenlake House 133.5
Manchester & Lon 270
Marchpole 116.5
Market Link Publ 55
Northern Recruit 138.5
Property Asset 7
Range Cooker Comp 94
Rapid Technology 4
Razorbak Vehicles 102.5
SCS Upholstery 111.5
Saatchi & Saatchi 113
Savoy Asset Mgmt 113
Seascope Shipping 252.5
Second Star 299
Second Scottish 103.5
Syntex 234
Terra 175.5
Vanguard Med Wts 43.5

FI Group n/p (640) 238.5
Taylor Niss n/p (50) 17.5

MAJOR CHANGES

RIBES: Danka Bc Sys 213p (+18.5p)
Pressac 307p (+12p)
Royalblue 280p (+10.5p)
Scot & New 785p (+27p)
BOC 987p (+32p)
Hays 839p (+25p)
Granada 921p (+20p)

FALLS: First Tech 273p (-12.5p)
Marta Spencer 574p (-6p)
ST 217p (-15p)
Scot & New 345p (-10p)
Com Union 873p (-25p)
French Conn 380p (-10p)
Argos 555p (-12p)
Northern Rock 548p (-11p)

Closing Prices Page 30

RECENT ISSUES

Autologics 267.5
BCO Technologies 158.5
Bosch 120.5
Boys Homes 103.5
Capital Opps Tst 113.5
Comland Comm 54
Energis 266.5
Firm Geared US 179
Glenlake 285
Glenlake House 133.5
Manchester & Lon 270
Marchpole 116.5
Market Link Publ 55
Northern Recruit 138.5
Property Asset 7
Range Cooker Comp 94
Rapid Technology 4
Razorbak Vehicles 102.5
SCS Upholstery 111.5
Saatchi & Saatchi 113
Savoy Asset Mgmt 113
Seascope Shipping 252.5
Second Star 299
Second Scottish 103.5
Syntex 234
Terra 175.5
Vanguard Med Wts 43.5

FI Group n/p (640) 238.5
Taylor Niss n/p (50) 17.5

MAJOR CHANGES

RIBES: Danka Bc Sys 213p (+18.5p)
Pressac 307p (+12p)
Royalblue 280p (+10.5p)
Scot & New 785p (+27p)
BOC 987p (+32p)
Hays 839p (+25p)
Granada 921p (+20p)

FALLS: First Tech 273p (-12.5p)
Marta Spencer 574p (-6p)
ST 217p (-15p)
Scot & New 345p (-10p)
Com Union 873p (-25p)
French Conn 380p (-10p)
Argos 555p (-12p)
Northern Rock 548p (-11p)

Closing Prices Page 30

RECENT ISSUES

Autologics 267.5
BCO Technologies 158.5
Bosch 120.5
Boys Homes 103.5
Capital Opps Tst 113.5
Comland Comm 54
Energis 266.5
Firm Geared US 179
Glenlake 285
Glenlake House 133.5
Manchester & Lon 270
Marchpole 116.5
Market Link Publ 55
Northern Recruit 138.5
Property Asset 7
Range Cooker Comp 94
Rapid Technology 4
Razorbak Vehicles 102.5
SCS Upholstery 111.5
Saatchi & Saatchi 113
Savoy Asset Mgmt 113
Seascope Shipping 252.5
Second Star 299
Second Scottish 103.5
Syntex 234
Terra 175.5
Vanguard Med Wts 43.5

FI Group n/p (640) 238.5
Taylor Niss n/p (50) 17.5

MAJOR CHANGES

RIBES: Danka Bc Sys 213p (+18.5p)
Pressac 307p (+12p)
Royalblue 280p (+10.5p)
Scot & New 785p (+27p)
BOC 987p (+32p)
Hays 839p (+25p)
Granada 921p (+20p)

FALLS: First Tech 273p (-12.5p)
Marta Spencer 574p (-6p)
ST 217p (-15p)
Scot & New 345p (-10p)
Com Union 873p (-25p)
French Conn 380p (-10p)
Argos 555p (-12p)
Northern Rock 548p (-11p)

Closing Prices Page 30

RECENT ISSUES

Autologics 267.5
BCO Technologies 158.5
Bosch 120.5
Boys Homes 103.5
Capital Opps Tst 113.5
Comland Comm 54
Energis 266.5
Firm Geared US 179
Glenlake 285
Glenlake House 133.5
Manchester & Lon 270
Marchpole 116.5
Market Link Publ 55
Northern Recruit 138.5
Property Asset 7
Range Cooker Comp 94
Rapid Technology 4
Razorbak Vehicles 102.5
SCS Upholstery 111.5
Saatchi & Saatchi 113
Savoy Asset Mgmt 113
Seascope Shipping 252.5
Second Star 299
Second Scottish 103.5
Syntex 234
Terra 175.5
Vanguard Med Wts 43.5

FI Group n/p (640) 238.5
Taylor Niss n/p (50) 17.5

MAJOR CHANGES

RIBES: Danka Bc Sys 213p (+18.5p)
Pressac 307p (+12p)
Royalblue 280p (+10.5p)
Scot & New 785p (+27p)
BOC 987p (+32p)
Hays 839p (+25p)
Granada 921p (+20p)

FALLS: First Tech 273p (-12.5p)
Marta Spencer 574p (-6p)
ST 217p (-15p)
Scot & New 345p (-10p)
Com Union 873p (-25p)
French Conn 380p (-10p)
Argos 555p (-12p)
Northern Rock 548p (-11p)

Closing Prices Page 30

RECENT ISSUES

Autologics 267.5
BCO Technologies 158.5
Bosch 120.5
Boys Homes 103.5
Capital Opps Tst 113.5
Comland Comm 54
Energis 266.5
Firm Geared US 179
Glenlake 285
Glenlake House 133.5
Manchester & Lon 270
Marchpole 116.5
Market Link Publ 55
Northern Recruit 138.5
Property Asset 7
Range Cooker Comp 94
Rapid Technology 4
Razorbak Vehicles 102.5
SCS Upholstery 111.5
Saatchi & Saatchi 113
Savoy Asset Mgmt 113
Seascope Shipping 252.5
Second Star 299
Second Scottish 103.5
Syntex 234
Terra 175.5
Vanguard Med Wts 43.5

FI Group n/p (640) 238.5
Taylor Niss n/p (50) 17.5

MAJOR CHANGES

RIBES: Danka Bc Sys 213p (+18.5p)
Pressac 307p (+12p)
Royalblue 280p (+10.5p)
Scot & New 785p (+27p)
BOC 987p (+32p)
Hays 839p (+25p)
Granada 921p (+20p)

FALLS: First Tech 273p (-12.5p)
Marta Spencer 574p (-6p)
ST 217p (-15p)
Scot & New 345p (-10p)
Com Union 873p (-25p)
French Conn 380p (-10p)
Argos 555p (-12p)
Northern Rock 548p (-11p)

Closing Prices Page 30

RECENT ISSUES

Autologics 267.5
BCO Technologies 158.5
Bosch 120.5
Boys Homes 103.5
Capital Opps Tst 113.5
Comland Comm 54
Energis 266.5
Firm Geared US 179
Glenlake 285
Glenlake House 133.5
Manchester & Lon 270
Marchpole 116.5
Market Link Publ 55
Northern Recruit 138.5
Property Asset 7
Range Cooker Comp 94
Rapid Technology 4
Razorbak Vehicles 102.5
SCS Upholstery 111.5
Saatchi & Saatchi 113
Savoy Asset Mgmt 113
Seascope Shipping 252.5
Second Star 299
Second Scottish 103.5
Syntex 234
Terra 175.5
Vanguard Med Wts 43.5

FI Group n/p (640) 238.5
Taylor Niss n/p (50) 17.5

MAJOR CHANGES

RIBES: Danka Bc Sys 213p (+18.5p)
Pressac 307p (+12p)
Royalblue 280p (+10.5p)
Scot & New 785p (+27p)
BOC 987p (+32p)
Hays 839p (+25p)
Granada 921p (+20p)

FALLS: First Tech 273p (-12.5p)
Marta Spencer 574p (-6p)
ST 217p (-15p)
Scot & New 345p (-10p)
Com Union 873p (-25p)
French Conn 380p (-10p)
Argos 555p (-12p)
Northern Rock 548p (-11p)

Closing Prices Page 30

RECENT ISSUES

Autologics 267.5
BCO Technologies 158.5
Bosch 120.5
Boys Homes 103.5
Capital Opps Tst 113.5
Comland Comm 54
Energis 266.5
Firm Geared US 179
Glenlake 285
Glenlake House 133.5
Manchester & Lon 270
Marchpole 116.5
Market Link Publ 55
Northern Recruit 138.5
Property Asset 7
Range Cooker Comp 94
Rapid Technology 4
Razorbak Vehicles 102.5
SCS Upholstery 111.5
Saatchi & Saatchi 113
Savoy Asset Mgmt 113
Seascope Shipping 252.5
Second Star 299
Second Scottish 103.5
Syntex 234
Terra 175.5
Vanguard Med Wts 43.5

FI Group n/p (640) 238.5
Taylor Niss n/p (50) 17.5

MAJOR CHANGES

RIBES: Danka Bc Sys 213p (+18.5p)
Pressac 307p (+12p)
Royalblue 280p (+10.5p)
Scot & New 785p (+27p)
BOC 987p (+32p)
Hays 839p (+25p)
Granada 921p (+20p)

FALLS: First Tech 273p (-12.5p)
Marta Spencer 574p (-6p)
ST 217p (-15p)
Scot & New 345p (-10p)
Com Union 873p (-25p)
French Conn 380p (-10p)
Argos 555p (-12p)
Northern Rock 548p (-11p)

Closing Prices Page 30

RECENT ISSUES

Autologics 267.5
BCO Technologies 158.5
Bosch 120.5
Boys Homes 103.5
Capital Opps Tst 113.5
Comland Comm 54
Energis 266.5
Firm Geared US 179
Glenlake 285
Glenlake House 133.5
Manchester & Lon 270
Marchpole 116.5
Market Link Publ 55
Northern Recruit 138.5
Property Asset 7
Range Cooker Comp 94
Rapid Technology 4
Razorbak Vehicles 102.5
SCS Upholstery 111.5
Saatchi & Saatchi 113
Savoy Asset Mgmt 113
Seascope Shipping 252.5
Second Star 299
Second Scottish 103.5
Syntex 234
Terra 175.5
Vanguard Med Wts 43.5

FI Group n/p (640) 238.5
Taylor Niss n/p (50) 17.5

MAJOR CHANGES

RIBES: Danka Bc Sys 213p (+18.5p)
Pressac 307p (+12p)
Royalblue 280p (+10.5p)
Scot & New 785p (+27p)
BOC 987p (+32p)
Hays 839p (+25p)
Granada 921p (+20p)

FALLS: First Tech 273p (-12.5p)
Marta Spencer 574p (-6p)
ST 217p (-15p)
Scot & New 345p (-10p)
Com Union 873p (-25p)
French Conn 380p (-10p)
Argos 555p (-12p)
Northern Rock 548p (-11p)

Closing Prices Page 30

RECENT ISSUES

Autologics 267.5
BCO Technologies 158.5
Bosch 120.5
Boys Homes 103.5
Capital Opps Tst 113.5
Comland Comm 54
Energis 266.5
Firm Geared US 179
Glenlake 285
Glenlake House 133.5
Manchester & Lon 270
Marchpole 116.5
Market Link Publ 55
Northern Recruit 138.5
Property Asset 7
Range Cooker Comp 94
Rapid Technology 4
Razorbak Vehicles 102.5
SCS Upholstery 111.5
Saatchi & Saatchi 113
Savoy Asset Mgmt 113
Seascope Shipping 252.5
Second Star 299
Second Scottish 103.5
Syntex 234
Terra 175.5
Vanguard Med Wts 43.5

FI Group n/p (640) 238.5
Taylor Niss n/p (50) 17.5

Brown's busy squirrelling may invite a bleak early winter

As 'inflation nutters' go, the Chancellor could be the biggest of them all

Gordon Brown's testimony to the Treasury Select Committee this week was a revelation. For more than two hours, the Chancellor was buffeted by MPs on all sides of the political divide. He was pronounced guilty of dangerous social engineering for cutting benefits to lone mothers, accused of penalising prudent savers by planning an upper limit on Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs), lambasted for letting down pensioners, called to account for failing to publish comprehensive public spending tables in the Pre-Budget Report, goaded for taking an unduly pessimistic view of public finances and blamed for sterling's strength. But, whatever the line of attack, Mr Brown hammered home the same message with awesome consistency. What the country needs, beyond all else, is stability with low inflation. Pensioners should not be unduly worried that rising council tax bills are set to dwarf their winter-warmer payments. What they need is a "stable economy with low inflation". Exporters are understandably worried about the strength of the pound but what really matters is that sterling is helping to control inflation. Stability is the most important thing for the unemployed. Companies will not invest if they feel that inflation is getting out of control.

The thought suddenly occurred that Mr Brown's decision to hand over power to set interest rates to the inflation nutters at the Bank of England may have been utterly inspired. It may have saved us from the greatest inflation muffer of them all.

Mr Brown is a man possessed by old Labour demons. He, like so many other politicians and economists of this generation, is obsessed with the economic mismanagement of the 1980s, when the strength of growth was woefully underestimated, the Government pumped up demand for electoral reasons, inflation exploded and bust followed. As if this horror was not enough to keep the Chancellor awake at night, he is desperately hung up on old Labour's reputation as the party that spent and bled its way out of trouble.

At the Treasury Select Committee this week, Mr Brown was quietly and firmly taken to task by Ruth Kelly, Labour MP for Bolton West, who has the unique vantage point of having come to the Commons from the Bank of England. Her point was that the Chancellor appeared to have adopted the most pessimistic assumptions possible on the public finances. She noted that the Chancellor's fiscal



Gordon Brown was clapped into the Treasury on May 2 on a ticket of radical supply side change to the labour market and the welfare state

arithmetic was based on the assumption that the sustainable growth rate of the economy is 2.25 per cent, a low figure given that growth has averaged 2.5 per cent over the past 30 years. She asked why the Chancellor was not taking into account the considerable temporary inflows to the Exchequer from the abolition of advance corporation tax (ACT), why the Treasury was assuming a long-term downward trend in VAT receipts and whether it was realistic to expect no privatisation proceeds at all. The probability that all these would turn out at the pessimistic end of realistic expectations was, Ms Kelly, extremely unlikely.

Mr Brown seems intent on pursuing an ultra-cautious line on fiscal policy and, in his Pre-Budget Report, seemed to be goading the Bank of England to do the same on monetary policy. Whereas the Bank is looking for inflation to fall throughout next year, the Treasury is forecasting a rise, despite expectations of a sharp slowdown in domestic growth and a chill, deflationary wind blowing in from Asia.

The conviction in the City is that the Chancellor wants the impending economic slowdown out of the way as soon as possible, exacerbating an unnecessarily tight squeeze on public spending (perhaps, if he is not careful, even to the point of recession if Asia has a large impact), so that the economy is growing and Treasury coffers flowing when Labour sets about trying to win a second term. This may be unfair cynicism. It may be that the Chancellor's demons have

genuinely got the better of him. Whatever the truth of his thinking, excessive prudence, has its dangers, not least to his own long-term programme of microeconomic reform. Seeking further improvement to the supply side of the economy, to ensure that the economy can deliver more growth and jobs in the future, is an admirable aim but, if the macroeconomy lets him down, Mr Brown will fail.

Above all, he needs the economy to enjoy a soft landing. The Chancellor told the Select Committee that low inflation was the most important ingredient for those seeking jobs and wondering whether to invest — but economic growth is the prerequisite for both. Companies do not invest because of low

inflation but because they see demand ahead. They employ people for the same reason.

Mr Brown is, of course, set on being powerless to determine whether the economy's landing is hard or soft. He has voluntarily strapped himself into a Conservative straitjacket on fiscal policy (and means to hamstring himself in the longer-term through his fiscal responsibility code) and handed monetary policy to the Bank. It may come as a relief to some that politicians cannot entirely have their wicked way with the economic cycle but the thought that we have never been so dependent on the good sense of a group of academic economists sitting in Threadneedle Street does make one a little queasy. Mr Brown's determination to have nothing to

do with running macroeconomic policy is a big gamble and one that defines his Chancellorship so far. It may be proved foolhardy but it is, without doubt, definite. It is also a very different type of inactivity to the sort employed by Kenneth Clarke, who put the macroeconomy on cruise control, when it needed nothing else, and left the microeconomy alone in the dog days of a Government that had no policy ideas left and no will to think up new ones.

Mr Brown's people may not be running the economy but they are feverishly busy. Their belief, long before they were clapped into the Treasury on May 2, was that a well-managed macroeconomic policy was the bare minimum for a reforming government and should take up as little time as possible. They argued that they would stand or fall on whether they could push through radical supply side change to the labour market and to the welfare state.

How much is actually getting done is extremely difficult to tell and we will have to wait for the findings of various reviews and special committees but, before they report, a definite pattern of priorities has emerged. Even within the existing control total, Mr Brown has shown that he means to redistribute public spending to priority areas. The lone mothers episode is only the first skirmish in a drive to save money on benefits (permanent savings if more return to the labour force) and re-channel it into education, education, education.

Perhaps more surprisingly, the Chancellor is not averse to

old-fashioned income redistribution, a fact that ought to cheer some of those critics from the left who voted against the Government last week. For all the public relations incompetence of the launch of ISAs, led by Geoffrey Robinson, the beleaguered Paymaster General (and, of course, the breach of trust with existing savers), Mr Brown is perfectly within his rights to decide that the Government has better things to spend its money on than tax relief for top rate taxpayers.

Mr Brown's team has admirable conviction and vigour but the ISA episode offers warning signals. For a Chancellor committed to long-term structural reform, the new policy seemed to be hopelessly short on detail (even as a consultative document) and its launch almost farcical, with nobody able to answer detailed questions.

It makes one wonder whether policy making has become too centralised in Mr Brown's office of special advisers or, on the other hand, contracted out to the great and good of the private sector, who may be bright and able but do have their hands full running large businesses. It also begs the question whether the detailed technical knowledge of Treasury civil servants is being mobilised as it should be. Despite Mr Brown's off-repeated desire for more open government, there is a closed-minded streak, a "you are either with us or against us" mentality that sometimes borders on paranoia. Given that this Chancellor is so keen to consult widely, this attitude cannot be healthy for the success of his programme.



Introducing ISA: Geoffrey Robinson at the unveiling

Son of Pru

ONE good thing about all the advertisements for perfume, alcohol and toys that swamp our television screens at this time of year is that they keep the odious "The Man from the Pru" slots off the box. These, of course, feature Sir Peter Davis in various relaxed poses — reading a book, walking by the beach, in fact everything but keeping a close eye on his direct sales operation.

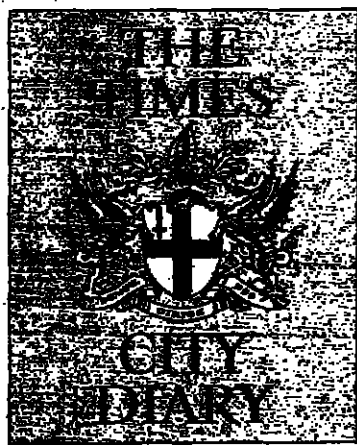
Who came up with these great adverts and who persuaded Sir Peter to feature himself in them? The trial

leads to the advertising agency Abbott Mead Vickers (or AMV/DDO) which came up with the campaign and happens to employ a chap called Matt Davis — son of Sir Peter.

● I AM afraid the gloriously named new head of the French employers' federation, Baron Ernest "Antoine" de Seillière de Laborde, has been exposed as a softy. Antoine — who it emerged recently is a close personal friend of Lionel Jospin, the Socialist Prime Minister — was elected on Tuesday, promising that he had a "killer instinct". Now it has emerged that the prize possessions at his Paris flat are four teddy bears he has owned since childhood — Bruno, François, Mustafa and Robert.

Meanies

I SEE the ghosts of Christmas past, present and future have some work to do. The Low Pay Unit has announced its 1997 Scrooge awards for the hardest-hearted employers, offering the worst deals to their staff. Among the nominees are a car park company in the Midlands, which was paying its staff £2.74 an hour while charging a local authority £3.20 an hour for the same employee,



a firm of painters and decorators, which told a new employee she would be paid only £2 an hour during a two-week trial then extended the trial period to six months, and a security company in Middlesex, which refused to pay a guard for 40 hours work over a weekend. But the prize goes to Square Deal Timber in Somerset, which employs a dozen staff at £3 an hour with no overtime, holiday or sick pay. It is closing for two weeks over Christmas and is not paying its employees a penny.

Sans Liberty

TIME for an update on the Denis Cassidy index. As I pointed out a couple of months ago, the Tyneside

tycoon who used to run British Homes Stores and Boddingtons is not having a happy time of it with the companies that now occupy his time. When this index was launched, Cassidy became agitated, but his attention was soon distracted thanks to the action of the Stewart-Liberty family and Bryan Myerson to have him removed as chairman of Liberty's. This was both good for the index — as Cassidy's struggle put some zest into Liberty shares. But he lost the fight and Liberty has now to be removed from the list.

Now there is further bad news. Oliver, the shoe chain Cassidy chairs, last week lost the battle to take over Sears's Shoe Express. And yesterday that fine label maker Ferguson — chairman D Cassidy — lost nearly a third of its value after a profit warning. Cassidy is planning to retire from Ferguson's board next year, presumably to lick his wounds.

Believable

FOR a few years now Lord Grade, five days short of his 91st birthday, has been talking with his customary enthusiasm about his latest project, a film called *Something to Believe In*. Now it is actually going to see the light of day. The film — "no sex, no violence, no bad language" has finished shooting. The cigar-chomping Lew has already sold continental European rights to the Kirch group of Germany and there is considerable interest from other parts of the

world. The film, featuring everyone from Tom Conti and Plácido Domingo to Maria Fillo, is a serious tear-jerker featuring a terminally ill blackjack dealer from Las Vegas and a weeping Madonna in Italy. It is much more likely to be a hit than some of Lew's other pictures — such as *Raise The Titanic*. Lew always says, with the wisdom of hindsight, that it would have cost less to lower the Atlantic. And to prove age does not wither him, Lew is also on the verge of getting a three-year extension to his contract advising a "foreign entertainment company" which just happens to be Euro Disney.

JASON NISSE



Age appears to be no barrier for the cigar-chomping Lord Grade

Accountants seek theme to symbolise their union

Jon Ashworth reads the runes for KPMG and Ernst & Young

Not of the artist formerly known as Prince, so much as the accountancy firm formally known as KPMG and Ernst & Young. This time next year, two of the oldest names in accounting could have disappeared — replaced by a symbol, instantly recognisable anywhere in the world. Sir Tim Bell, one-time adviser to Baroness Thatcher, has been asked to devise an emblem. Crafting KPMG and Ernst & Young into a universally acceptable symbol or name is but one of the challenges thrown up by the proposed merger of the two firms — if it goes ahead. Regulators in Washington and Brussels are deliberating whether the concentration of power in professional services has already gone far enough. Approval could follow next summer, with implementation by October 1.

Colin Sharman, KPMG's UK senior partner, and proposed chairman of the international firm, concedes that the fate of the deal rests with the competition authorities. The same is true of Price Waterhouse and Coopers & Lybrand — pursuing their own merger. Sharman is confident of winning the regulators over. "We're confident that we can persuade them that not only is this necessary for us to be able to continue to be effective in the market place, but also that the worries which were expressed in certain narrow sectors of the market about reductions in competition are unfounded, and should not be allowed to prevent the merger taking place."

UK finance directors — notably at British Airways, Rentokil Initial, Bass and National Power — have expressed disquiet at the proposed deals. They say the shift from six firms to four — or even three, if Arthur Andersen were to link with Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu — has worrying implications. Fees could be forced up, and choice reduced. Not so, insists Sharman, who says the "noise level" surrounding the merger is largely a UK phenomenon. "We have to persuade people that what we're doing is sensible, and is something which is not going to destroy competition. I think all the evidence is that it isn't."

He points to the last round of consolidation in the industry, which saw the Big Eight become the Big Six. "There is absolutely no evidence whatsoever that the reduction from eight to six either reduced competition or resulted in an increase in fee levels. Exactly the opposite appears to have happened. Audit fees in real terms have been falling. Profits and turnovers of the FTSE-100 have been increasing. Secondly, most

tenders usually come down to three people anyway."

KPMG and Ernst & Young have drafted a global merger agreement, setting out the terms of the merger, and creating the new entity. The document lays down the structure, including a new international board, and establishes the ground rules for selecting a new name. It establishes an eight-member joint steering committee to oversee the implementation of the merger.

With this in place, Sharman and his counterparts are free to press ahead with their preparations. The case for the merger is forcefully argued. Sharman says: "You have to look at what is happening in the global market place. The consolidation in things like financial services is creating huge entities which we have to audit. Look at the potential scale of the United Bank of Switzerland. How the hell are you going to audit that if you're not big?"

The theme runs through the submissions to regulators. Money saved by pooling resources will be pumped into emerging economies. KPMG and

Ernst & Young each spend about \$70 million a year on international development. Pooling resources on technology and new services could perhaps free \$75 million a year for investment in emerging markets. Hence the need for a new name — in the shape of a global symbol.

As Sharman puts it: "We haven't really changed the way in which we deliver services for a hundred years. We're about to — dramatically. For a hundred years, we've delivered our services on paper and face to face... The next ten to 15 years will see a dramatic change in the way in which we deliver services. They'll be on screens. We'll get paid differently. We may well be delivering services that we get paid for by the number of hits on our icon on a screen. Put all of that into a pot, and we believe we go for a new name and brand."

So farewell Peat Marwick Mitchell, Ernst and Whinney and other history-laden names. One possibility is KEY — capturing a little of the existing firms, yet providing a symbol in the shape of a key, with overtones of unlocking the door to wealth creation.

The regulators could yet scupper both sets of deals, forcing the firms to look at other fund-raising alternatives. Put simply, a merger remains the easiest way of raising money. Sharman intends to hammer the message home. "The regulators have shown every sign of being open. It's up to us to convince them of the merits of the case."



Sharman: confident



"You've had Christmas early. Why can't I?"

TRAVEL

"What's the best way to travel on the Internet?"

There's nothing pedestrian about LineOne. It gives you fast and easy access to the Internet, and the home page directs you straight to the subject you're interested in. If you want to explore the real world as well as the cyberspace, the Travel zone gives you invaluable advice and information on where to stay. Check in soon.

Try LineOne and the Internet FREE. Call 0800 111 210.

www.lineone.net

It's what you want to know

After your first LineOne is available from 12.00 to 14.00 on 0800 111 210.

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

[illegible]bennet@iwtb.britnet.com'."/>

Why many people will try
for a pilots licence this year.

Why few will get one.

The pilots watch Ref. 5241 Model XL
IWC now has available from £1,500.

IWC

International Watch Co. Ltd., Schaffhausen, Switzerland
Since 1868

World's finest timepieces are exclusively available from selected watch specialists.
For an illustrated catalogue and a list of nationwide
representatives please telephone J.W. Bennett on 0171 430 8253 or fax 0171 430 4760.
E-mail: bennet@iwtb.britnet.com

Last orders in the lottery saloon

Time, ladies and gentlemen, please! The words have a melancholy ring, do they not? Especially when they cut short a riotous session during which some estimable reveller — temporarily loaded, perhaps, from backing a 25-1 winner in the 2.30 at Newmarket — has announced that “the drinks are on me”.

Everyone has quaffed prodigiously. Life has sweetened briefly. But now the saloon door is propped open. A blast of cold air and even colder reality hits the flushed faces. The mortgage is overdue, the car won't start, the marriage is crumbling, the kids are ungovernable, the job is unbearable, and the in-laws are staying for Christmas. The party's over. The pain is back.

But why did these doleful fantasies trudge through the morbid thickets of my mind yesterday, as Parliament debated the new Lottery Bill? After all, it is a long overdue piece of remedial legislation. It frees lottery money to be spent on what really matters: people, not buildings. It allows the

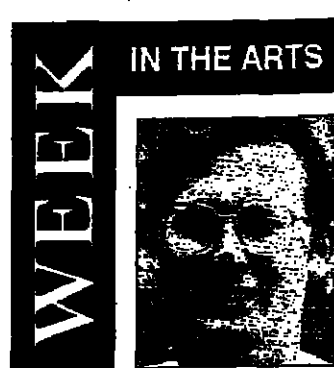
Arts Council to adopt what Chris Smith, Culture Secretary, hilariously calls a “holistic approach to the quantum total of funding available to the arts”. What that means in English (I think) is that lottery money and Treasury money now goes into the same pot.

It means, above all, that the short-term future of dozens of tottering arts organisations is probably assured. In the long term, of course, the Treasury might cut its cultural expenditure to a pittance, or the Government might divert yet more lottery money to “new opportunities” (ie, propping up health or education). But those are tomorrow's battles. The main thing today is that the ring-fencing of arts lottery money — which lavishly refurbished theatres while leaving theatre companies to crash — is abolished.

We have been through an amazing three years. We shall not see

such an era of conspicuous cultural expenditure again. But now time has been called. The bar is closed: the man who bought all the drinks has vanished. The era of big capital projects is over. Unfortunately, however, one or two stragglers have only just arrived in the pub. They were promised free booze, and are distraught to discover that the cellars are dry.

Most prominent of the latecomers is the South Bank Centre. You can understand the frustration of the people there. Their grant application has been four years in discussion. It has been through more rewrites than Liz Taylor's marriage certificate. Matching funding, including a breathtaking £17 million gift from Paul Hamlyn, is in place — but precariously dependent on an £75 million Arts Council lottery grant. Last week the Arts Council finally said yes. More than that, it described Lord



RICHARD MORRISON

Rogers's glass roof scheme as “essential and visionary”. Champagne all round, then? Not exactly. No sooner had the Arts Council said yes than it said no. Or rather, it issued a statement of such Delphic obscurity that only

intense textual deconstruction disclosed an admission that there is actually no money left in the lottery kitty to fund such a huge capital project. Not if the Arts Council also wants to fund equally “essential and visionary” building projects in Bristol, Garshead and Stratford.

There followed a nimble rendition of that famous English gavotte *Pass the Buck*, in which the Arts Council appealed to the Culture Secretary to finagle an accountability sleight-of-hand that would allow future lottery income to be spent now. No way, said Smith. The bar is closed: no more free drinks, and definitely no credit.

That is tough on the South Bank, because actually its scheme is “essential and visionary”. Indeed, London's future as a world-class musical capital depends on making the Festival Hall and its ghastly concrete aprons a place

where people want to go. Even yesterday secret talks were going on to save the scheme. But the harsh probability is that the South Bank may have missed last orders in the lottery saloon.

I am sorry about that. But it was an accident waiting to happen. The backlash against the “metropolitan smoots in the trough” perception of the past three years was bound to come. However much the lottery may have improved the country's “cultural fabric”, there is no doubt that several huge lottery handouts have been public-relations disasters. We now need a period of quiet, steady, uncontroversial investment in quality performances, audience development and arts education. No more *grands projets*. Just hundreds of *petites victoires*. Let's hope Smith's Lottery Bill provides the basis for them.

In that respect, one small but revolutionary innovation of the past three years must be retained. That is Arts For Everyone Express, which channelled small grants from lottery funds (£5,000 maximum) to amateur and youth groups across Britain in a pilot scheme this year. At a stroke it did more to counter the “elitist” charge against the arts than 50 years of orthodox subsidy. In just three months it made 5,325 awards, reaching approximately 240,000 performers and an estimated audience of five million.

Those are astonishing figures for an outlay of just £21 million. To put it in context: the Millennium Dome would need to produce a comparable return on its £800 million cost. The Arts Council is rightly criticised for many of its decisions. But making this vastly wide-ranging scheme work was admirable. It must become a permanent fixture. There may be no more free drinks in the lottery saloon. But free peanuts? Those we can surely still afford.

THEATRE: Gogol's triumphant contest in hysteria; fairytale premiere for a Sondheim musical; and a curious Bardic transformation

Over the top on a trapeze

You know it as soon as Ian McDiarmid scuttles on to a set whose plank walls and floor are so askew, they would surprise even the architect who was employed by the old woman who lived in a shoe. Moreover, McDiarmid's Mayor looks like a cross between a poisonous prawn and a disintegrating ferret, and he snaps “a bit of what I ye please” at his fellow-functionaries. Jonathan Kent's production of Gogol's great comedy is clearly not going to be a conventional one.

Actually, it is hard to say what a conventional revival would be. This is a play that in its time has been directed by Stanislavsky and Meyerhold and a million Marxists. It has been performed realistically, farcically, didactically and as a horrifying nightmare. It has, I suspect, less often been played as a grotesque mix of pacy knockabout and seedy fun in which a Fauntleroy from an odd English St Petersburg is mistaken for a government inspector by 19th-century Russian provincials who have borrowed their accents and some of their ethics from *Trainspotting*.

As it turns out, Gogol can take it. The evening is highly enjoyable, thanks particularly to the imagination of the two lead actors and the adaptor. John Byrne's Scots version is pretty free. My translation does not require the Mayor to reproach his education as a game teacher who has been “caught having relations with a piece of gymnasium equipment”, ie, the school's vaulting horse. Nor are there references to strong wine “with the Ivan the

The Government Inspector

Terrible label” or ridding the town of “perverts and Papists”. And Khlestakov, the young wastrel the mayor takes into his house, should surely describe his hostess as “all right”, not as someone he might fancy “if I were on a desert island and had my eyes put out by a shark”.

But why complain when you get such verve not only from your adaptor but from your cast? The relationship between McDiarmid's Lord Provost, as the Mayor is rechristened, and Tom Hollander's Khlestakov is a contest in hysteria. It is often over the top, sometimes over the big top — yet, wonder of wonders, it never becomes embarrassing or unfunny.

Hollander is always the overgrown infant, whether he is hungry and half-blubbing in pettish self-pity, or somersaulting in terror from a Provost he thinks has come to arrest him, or gulping and narcissistically gurgling at the goodies coming his way, or flashing goofy, greedy smiles at the women pursuing him. As for McDiarmid, he moves from frenzied panic to feral glee as Khlestakov succumbs to his bribes. His Provost is not the “dignified” figure Gogol specified. Rather, he's an insecure slum kid who has risen to become a roughhouse street operator and, at his moment of maximum hubris, is the Gorbals tyrant in exaltation.

There are other actors capable of simultaneously snarling



Tom Hollander as the overgrown infant Khlestakov in Jonathan Kent's marvellously unconventional production of *The Government Inspector*

and gloating, raging at their enemies and glorying in their triumph over them. I don't think anybody but McDiarmid could make you feel you are witnessing a sort of emotional and verbal trapeze, looping across the ocarinas from mood to mood. It is an astoundingly bold performance in a production that, thanks also to lively support from Brian Pettifer, Stuart McQuarrie and others, never relaxes its imaginative hold.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

Poop-poop! It's Sir John

Ian Judge has a lucrative talent for transforming Shakespeare's plays into National Heritage fairytales. It takes real ingenuity, however, to turn the Bard's most parochial comedy into *The Wind in the Willows*. As played by that suave old buffoon, Leslie Phillips, Sir John Falstaff is a magnificent Toad. With his pregnant gut squeezed into an impossibly tweedy Elizabethan suit, Phillips turns the melancholy Toad into an endearing egomaniac with a greasy orange toupee and a supernatural belief in his sexual prowess.

How the fat are fallen, especially when they try to seduce the bored housewives of Windsor. The weasels are

The Merry Wives of Windsor

Susannah York's Mistress Ford and Joanna McCallum's Mistress Page. The Gloucestershire crew, led by Peter Reeves's Shallow and Christopher Luscombe's Slender, do a lot of persistent badgering. And Falstaff's cronies Pistol, Nym and Bardolph are the motley collection of London sewer rats.

So much for pantomime. Yes, this is a clever cast, but it is also infuriatingly smug. Few designers are capable of filling the Barbican stage with

as much topiary as Tim Goodchild. In a fit of pastoral authenticity, he succeeds in making early 17th-century Windsor look like the residential graveyard it is today. The local feud is between the publican and a French physician, and the serious gossip is the gulling of the lackadaisical Knight by Mistresses Ford and Page.

After teasing us with half a dozen brilliantly delivered lines, Phillips's Falstaff is thrown into a laundry basket and dumped in the Thames. The role of the caddish smooth seducer comes so easily to him that it becomes tedious when he's not around. Edward Rotherbridge has to work harder for his come-uppance as the jealous husband, Master Ford, pursuing Falstaff like Inspector Clouseau. It's a nice, messy piece of acting that makes the wives look far more weaselly than the men.

The rest of the performances feel fatally disconnected from Ian Judge's Willow production. Accents shamelessly skate all over the place. Cartoon caricatures light the way. For what it's worth, Christopher Luscombe has an indecently camp way with Slender and by far the best grip on the play's slippery language. But the steal of the night is Guy Henry's physician, who turns his French mispronunciations into very British scatological jokes. Why commute to the 17th century, however, when you can get all this on the 5.08pm from Paddington?

JAMES CHRISTOPHER

Music master's early lesson

The story of this raucous is the stuff of fairytales. It should have been Stephen Sondheim's professional debut back in the mid-1950s, but the producer died and the show was put on hold. The hold lasted 40 years, but the fairytale bit is not that a prince at last woke the sleeping beauty, but that rescue came from the management of a fringe theatre — the metaphors break down here so I'll abandon them — who heard the music, mounted a concert version with the composer in the audience, and was given the go-ahead to produce a Sondheim premiere.

At three hours the show is too long for its content, but presumably a feeling for its historical interest discouraged leaving anything out. Catching snatches of the later Sondheim in the twists of the music and the dapper rhymes is certainly fun. “I was pouring coffee, you lit a cigarette. After that I forget.” The conversational tone is unmistakable, as is the skill at slipping everyday experiences into a song which will then be repeated from a second, tartier point of view.

The book is by Julius and Philip Epstein, the authors of *Casablanca*, fondly recalling the comradely Brooklyn of

their youth in the early months of 1929. Gene is their hero, son of a traveller in ladies' underwear but dreaming of joining Manhattan's high society. Every American's duty is to climb to the top but Gene relies on fantasy, acting big and losing his buddies' money. But they forgive him because he's Gene.

The lyrics sometimes show Sondheim putting an ironic take on this tale of the American's right to be ambitious, so long as he finally settles for love and the childhood neigh-



bourhood. One of the buddies sings “All of us are for toods”, but he means motherhood etc. The characters are a million blocks from the Jets and Sharks Sondheim would soon be giving voice to.

The ensemble work is nifty, though the buddies' attitude to dames is charmless. The co-directors (Carol Metcalfe, Clive Page) achieve much on

a stage that turns from front porch to hotel steps, speakeasy and other deftly suggested settings by Bridget Kimak. Sam Newman makes a personable, sure-footed Gene, and Anna Francolini's clear voice, singing the melody high above the piano and sax, catches the style of the period particularly well. The occasion is gently pleasant but one can see why Sondheim was content to turn his attention elsewhere all those years ago.

JEREMY KINGSTON



Unmistakably Sondheim: Sam Newman and Anna Francolini dream of Manhattan

Rough and unready enchantment

OPERA

The Magic Flute
Grand, Leeds

defly used and forms a chic, glinting surface for the lunar beauty of the Queen of Night (a valiant Cara O'Sullivan) and the golden sunrise of Sarastro (a stalwart Clive Bayley). And both the beastie maid of chairs and old rope, and the temple portals formed by three fluorescent tubes, would grace any London gallery.

Even the market-stall fun-fabric

animals with paper bags over their heads, even the grey cotton coats of Sarastro's brotherhood could be tolerated if the creatures inside them had any evident purpose in their brief lives. Neither group seems at all certain what to do with their space (how on earth were Monika Pagneux, movement, and two assistant directors usefully employed?). Nor do they seem to have any *raison d'être* in a staging which shows not a flicker of insight into the uses of enchantment, character, motivation, rite or ritual. Even the jokes fall flat in Arden's own translation of the spoken dialogue.

This rough and unready evening

was eroded further still by the indisposition of Jamie MacDougall, though Nell Archer's Tarnino is both sensitive and robust. Both Margaret Richardson and her understudy were too ill to sing: Richardson, however, mimed the part of Pamina while Susannah Glynn sang quite beautifully from a music stand in the wings. Eric Roberts was a somewhat threadbare Papageno, Margaret Preece his luscious Paganini.

As if chorus and orchestra were not working under sufficient duress, Brad Cohen, conducting, takes the entire opera at such a ludicrously fast speed that ensembles are gabbled and much of the orchestral playing garbled. I would like to think that things might improve once the show is on the road, but with both conductor and director riding shamelessly roughshod over Mozart, I am pessimistic.

HILARY FINCH

Monster raving loony

Remember the scruffy fat boy who sat on his own in the corner of the class and would always be bullied at playtime? The one from the really rough family whose mother would give him a pig's trotter to suck on rather than an ice lolly?

Well, the fat boy has grown up, adopted the name of Johnny Vegas and, a half-empty lager bottle in his hand, has set about taking his revenge on the world. Instead of haranguing strangers in the kebabs van queue after closing hours in Manchester town centre, he vents his aggressions in comedy clubs, and shows how he found redemption by taking pottery classes. Reactions to Vegas's performance in Edinburgh this year

COMEDY

Johnny Vegas
The Tale of London

were so extravagant that it was tempting to assume that the usual festival hype had taken over. But his show is inspired. By turns self-pitying and belligerent, drunkenly incoherent and epigrammatic, he has created an irresistible monster.

The comedy of menace is a commonplace today: every other stand-up wants you to believe he is a psychotic rather than an English graduate playing with swear words. Vegas, on the other hand, is a fully rounded theatrical creation with no dress sense. If you met him at a bus-stop late one night, you would be torn between the urge to stay out of punching range and to edge closer to catch more of his rambling homilies.

Banal events are dressed up in florid prose pitched halfway between Les Dawson and Dylan Thomas. Men do not simply fall at chatting up women, they fumble with the Keys of Capability at the Door of Desire. “Sexuality is a shoe,” he tells a supposedly suppressed homosexual at a nearby table. “You can't wear it on the wrong foot.”

Anyone else seated close to the stage was liable to be dragged into making paper-chains to help to decorate the room. Depending on his mood, this sardonic Lord of Misrule might strike up a rough-and-ready singalong of *New York, New York* or organise a chaotic kissing version of the Mexican Wave.

A sense of danger is never far away. He rants at journalists, his Uncle Fred and anyone reckless enough to try heckling him. Yet at the end he falls under the spell of a girl in the audience who helps him to make a jug on his ever-present potter's wheel. It was a nice jug, too, so he gave it to her as a token of his affection. Beneath the dysfunctional rage, Johnny just wants to be loved.

CLIVE DAVIS

Lyric Theatre Hammersmith
Until 1 January

“WONDERFUL”
“STAGED WITH WIT AND FLAIR”
“WONDERFULLY DARING”

Treasure Island
Robert Lonsdale
Production

BOX OFFICE 0181 741 2311

David Sinclair looks back on a 1997 of unexpected highs and lows – and the growth of a chilling trend



In 1997, Elton John's *Candle in the Wind* became the best-selling single ever; Geri and the Spice Girls sang on; Liam Gallagher and Oasis saw the wheels come off Britpop; and Prodigy – Keith Flint to the fore – attracted MPs' wrath

Highlights of the fast show

Writing on this page two weeks ago, my colleague Nick Kelly observed: "If there's one thing missing from the whole Oasis phenomenon, it's a sense of perspective." It is a point which could equally well apply to 1997 itself, a year in which the key players in British pop seemed to vacillate between pinnacles and troughs at wildly implausible extremes.

Naturally, Oasis were the most obvious example. With a mind-boggling first-day sales tally of 356,000 units, their third album, *Be Here Now*, became the fastest-selling album of all time. But by the end of the year, after the band had put in a series of increasingly workaday concerts, Chris Evans was seen trying to "revive" a copy of the album on his show *TFI Friday* with a defibrillator machine, confirming a growing feeling among many of those who had bought the record in such haste that they were now having to repent at leisure.

Evans found his own fortunes swinging in the opposite direction. He started the year by storming out

of his much-coveted breakfast show slot at Radio 1, prompting some commentators to suggest that his glory days had gone the way of the Britpop phenomenon he had done so much to promote. But by the end of the year he had bought a controlling interest in Virgin Radio and emerged as a new media mogul, a heavier hitter than he had ever been as a mere DJ.

As predicted, Prodigy swept to the top of the British and American charts with their album *The Fat of the Land* and swept up awards wherever they were being offered, from *Q* magazine's to MTV's. However, the release of *Smash My Black Up* as a single, accompanied by an appropriately eye-catching billboard advertising campaign, prompted a wave of fierce indignation. The same people who had last year applauded the group for the

subversive sound and imagery of *Firestarter* – of course it would not encourage people to start fires – could now be found standing shoulder to shoulder with conservative academic Roger Scruton and a grouping of Labour MPs in denouncing the unhealthy effect of such an irresponsible message.

But if ever a sense of perspective was truly lacking it was in the media's response to the Spice Girls, the group which rode the roller-coaster of British pop in 1997 from top to bottom and are now, whisper it, on the way back up again. It is easy to see why people would want the Spice Girls to fail. They have been over-zealously marketed (which may be why they got rid of their manager) and they are definitely not cool.

But the way in which their second album, *Spiceworld*, has

been written off as a commercial failure is pure fantasy. It has already sold 700,000 copies and will probably pass the million mark by the end of the year in Britain alone.

Their TV programme, *An Audience with the Spice Girls*, on December 1 attracted an audience of 11.8 million, about three times the average viewing figure for *Top of the Pops* and hardly the sort of response to an act for whom the bubble has supposedly burst.

With early reviews of their new movie, *Spiceworld*, which opens on Boxing Day, taking a surprisingly favourable tack, it looks as if the backlash to the Spice backlash is about to get underway. At the very least, it would be nice to think that the group's detractors might inject

a dose of reality into future reporting of their antics.

Perspective was also in short supply following the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. In the pop world, as elsewhere, her demise prompted a strange sort of euphoric hysteria, enabling Elton John's remake of *Candle in the Wind* to become the biggest-selling single ever.

But the various colossal successes of 1997 concealed something of an impasse in mainstream rock. Sales of albums by Supergrass, Paul Weller, Sleeper, and Black Grape (who have this week cancelled the remaining dates of their tour because of "nervous exhaustion") all fell short of expectations, as did Pulp's only single, *Help the Aged*. And apart from the Verve, an old band that suddenly found itself with the right album in the right

place at the right time, and the delightful R&B of All Saints, there was little new activity to get excited about. Embrace may have spent the year being feted as the new Oasis, but on the evidence of their lacklustre efforts so far, this seems somewhat far-fetched. And while there have been spectacular gains in drum and bass thanks to Roni Size, and the big beat sounds of the Chemical Brothers, *Propellerheads* et al, dance is still another matter.

Strange too has been the peculiar dearth of major album releases toward the end of this year. Apart from Celine Dion's *Let's Talk About Love*, the Diana, Princess of Wales Tribute album and the usual *Best Of...* compilations, there has been virtually nothing to speak of since the end of October.

More depressingly, 1997 was bookended by two deaths. The

demise of Michael Hutchence in December took place in the full glare of the media spotlight at its most garish. In January, though, Billy MacKenzie, the former singer of the Associates, took his own life under quieter circumstances – in his father's garden shed. It sounds a terrible thing to say, but along with plane crashes and drink and drug overdoses, suicide has become a very rock'n'roll way to go, especially since the demise of Kurt Cobain and (probably) Richey Edwards. But until the 1990s such tragedies had been few and far between: Nick Drake (1974), Ian Curtis (1980), Richard Manuel of the Band (1986), and that was about it. It is a chilling thought, but perhaps, as the highs of rock'n'roll get ever more frantically higher, the lows are also getting correspondingly lower.

Once lost, it is hard to restore a sense of perspective. The pop world has become like a junkie, hooked on its own hyperbole, demanding ever more extreme doses of instant success and failure, outrage and excess just to keep standing still.

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, and Damon

Look boys, it's Christmas – time to kiss under the mistletoe and call off the damaging Blur-Oasis wars

Time to gather round, pop-cherubs, for a Christmas fairytale. This is a story about how two warring pop stars – Noel and Damon – should finally lay down their knuckledusters and their fighting man's talk, find a suitable sprig of mistletoe, and make up for Christmas.

The truth is that Noel and Damon have much in common, and this is why the whole Blur/Oasis "war" started in the first place. From Oasis's inception they were constantly compared to Blur – both were indie bands who had been influenced by the Manchester "baggy" scene; were media-literate; had record collections that buckled the shelves with Beatles/Stones/Kinks/Who/Sex Pistols; and wanted to rule the world by the year 2000.

When their "war" started, it was instigated by Damon, who believed that by moving the release date of *Country House* to the same day as the release of *Roll With It* he would roundly whup the Oasis behinds and prove himself to be ruler of all pop. *Country*

House did beat *Roll With It* to the peak of the charts, which annoyed Noel, principally because he had a boyhood dream, as you do, of getting more No 1 hits than the Jam. Noel sulked, Damon was triumphant, and the nation, as one, said: "And that made *News At Ten*? Is ITV on moon-jucer?"

However, Damon had badly miscalculated – by the crest of their fame arc, while Oasis were still ascending, Noel and Damon were still ascending. By the end of the year, it was clear that Oasis had the throne in the Palace of Pop while Blur were uncomfortably perched on a foot-stool. Damon had risked everything and lost. Noel had forfeited the battle but won the war.

The results of this scrap have profoundly affected pop, and not entirely for the better. For Damon, it was a crushing, fist-clenching humiliation – like waking up the next morning having danced naked on a table the night before. He had staked his crown on literature, middle-class pop, beating working-class rock, and lost. He was forced to abandon his world-beating ambitions, and



CAITLIN MORAN



Brimed: but Damon Albarn and Blur snatched artistic victory from the jaws of chart defeat

return to stripped-down, left-field American indie to consolidate a wavering fan base. Happily, on the subsequent album, *Blur*, this has turned out to be an artistic triumph.

However, winning the war was the worst thing that could have happened to Oasis, and to Noel Gallagher in particular. Having thrashed his enemy, Noel became puffed up on triumphalism, resulting in those embarrassing "This is history!" yells at Knebworth, and the self-satisfied boast of *Be Here Now*. And this smugness still seems, in the main, from vanquishing Damon. The widely discussed significance of the *Be Here Now* artwork, which featured a calendar showing "21 August" – was – I can exclusively reveal for the first time ever, as a special Christmas treat – because that was the date *Country House* beat *Roll With It*.

It to No 1; but if Damon could be here now, in 1997, and try to go head-to-head with Oasis again, he'd lose. Just call me Miss Marple.

The truth is that Noel probably aspires to being Damon; and that Damon is jealous of Noel. Damon is a literate, middle-class bohemian, and Noel's big hero is John Lennon – a working-class rocker who became a middle-class, literate bohemian. Damon would love to connect with the masses and lose himself in euphoria, rather than constantly over-analyse everything he does – as Noel is able to. It's rather ironic that Oasis's most successful song to date is *Wonderwall*, the key lyric from which is: "There are many things that I would like to say to you/But I don't know how" – mourning Noel's lack of vocal; while Damon, who has too many words, chucked

them all in the bin for Blur's most successful song, *Song 2*, which consists entirely of Damon mindlessly and joyfully yelling "Who-ho! Well I feel heavy-metal".

Frankly, Damon and Noel have too much in common, and too many things to learn from each other, to remain enemies. I rather suspect that one day, not in the too distant future, they will gather in an empty bar, and talk until the sun rises. They'll never be pals, and they will both threaten to kill the other if either ever mentions it; but forever afterwards, when they are slugging each other off in idle moments, they will both have a twinkle in their eye.

And hopefully Damon will tip Noel the wink that no guitar solo should ever last more than 12 seconds – which is the greatest present Britain could ask for in 1998.

Speed garage low on fuel

POP ALBUMS

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Dream Team in Session Volume 2
(4 Liberty/Deconstruction 74321 549032)
SPEED garage is the improbable label for the dance trend currently sweeping the nation's clubs, and the Dream Team production/DJ collective comprising Timmi Magic, DJ Spooky, Mikee B and Luigi is the hottest name on the scene.

The sound is basically a mixture of house and swingbeat, a lolling rhythm that introduces a sensual dynamic into the otherwise monotonously pneumatic beat that has dominated dance-floors for the past decade or so.

Dream Team in Session Volume 2 stitches together remakes of tracks by artists including Damage, Anthill Mob, Double 99 and New Horizon into a typically anonymous soundtrack.

Unlike drum and bass or the big beat sound of the Chemical Brothers, there is no serious attempt at musical innovation, and if this is as radical as it gets then I suspect speed garage will have died a quick and painless death before most people have had occasion to discover what exactly it is.



The Dream Team collective – hot now but for how long?

DELBERT MCCLINTON
One of the Fortunate Few
(Curb/Rising Tide RTD 53042)
THE Nashville-based Texan Delbert McClinton has been on the road for the best part of 40 years – from the roadhouse circuit of the 1960s to President Clinton's inauguration ball in the 1990s – and if anybody knows how to win over an audience, he does. His easy-going blend of country, blues and rock'n'roll is always good company and invariably pleasant on the ear.

himself. It is a trait which tends to make the tracks on *One of the Fortunate Few*, which features a host of guests including Vince Gill, John Prime and the ubiquitous B.B. King.

Old Weakness is thus a dead ringer for the Rolling Stones' *Honky Tonk Women*. *Sending Me Angels* sounds like the Band. *Too Much Stuff* bears more than a passing resemblance to Chuck Berry's *Too Much Monkey Business* and so on.

As a result, although they are nicely performed, the songs on this album lack an original mark of authority.

DAVID SINCLAIR

Cheery to the Finnish

JAZZ ALBUMS

lads, pop tunes, joyfully rumbustious romps, artful pastiches, Sibelius... all are grist to the trio's mill, but whether alone or when joined by the violins of Jaakko and Pekka Kuusisto, they somehow manage to produce utterly distinctive and genuinely humorous but consistently adroit jazz.

JIM HALL
Panorama
(Telarc CD-83408)
WHEN Sonny Rollins formed a pianofless band for his 1962 comeback album *The Bridge*, one of its members was the guitarist Jim Hall. And what was Rollins's reason for approaching Hall? His "incredible harmonic sense" and sensitivity.

Thirty-five years later, Hall's quiet, understated mastery, both as subtle accompanist and thoughtful soloist, has been recognised by the award to him of Denmark's Jazzper Prize – the "Jazz Oscar" – and this album contains nine good reasons why. Recorded live at the Village Vanguard, and featuring Hall (with bassist Scott Colley and drummer Terry Clarke) alongside a series of guests (pianists Geoff Keezer and Kenny Barron, alto player Greg Osby, flugelhorn player Art Farmer, trombonist Slide Hampton), it showcases a neat, elegant, unostentatiously versatile player meshing as faultlessly with his stellar partners as he did with Rollins all those years ago.

CHRIS PARKER

What you hear is what you get

WHEN you think how his contemporaries from the late 1970's have turned out – Elvis Costello, Joe Jackson, the Stranglers, Sting even – you would have to say that Paul Weller has kept himself well up to the mark. David Sinclair writes: At 39 he looks in good shape and, having produced some of his best work since the Jam in the 1990s he is still respected as an honorary member of the current generation of Britpop stars.

However, on the first of two nights at this temporary struc-

ture housing an audience of 6,000 on wasteland next to the long defunct Battersea Power Station, he was not a happy man. Like other acts to have played there this month, Weller had been forced to turn the volume down. "You can thank the bloody council for me having to play this quiet," he said after opening the set with brisk, wiry versions of *The Changingman* and *Friday Street*.

In truth, the sound was great, making up in clarity what it may have lacked in

LIVE GIG

presence, and allowing the rich detail of Weller's songs to shine through. Weller, for his part, seemed content to vent his anger on the next number, *Peacock Suit*, which he ripped into with venomous relish, his gruff, soulful voice picking off the words like darts in a shooting gallery. "I don't need

a ship to sail in stormy weather/I don't need you to ruffle the feathers of my peacock suit."

Although very much the man in charge, Weller presented himself as part of the band, a lean but muscular four-piece featuring Steve White on drums, Yolanda Charles on bass, and Matt Deighton on guitar, with Weller taking most of the guitar solos himself. From *Porcelain Gods* onwards they were joined by a three-piece string section, which contributed oc-

casional dashes of colour to various songs, notably *In Suzie's Room*, which came during a more relaxed acoustic section in the middle of the set.

There was no fuss or frivolity as they catered into the home straight with *Sunflower*, *Mermaids* and *Into Tomorrow*, a tremendous volley of hits that confirmed Weller as one of the best mainstream rock songwriters Britain has ever produced and a diehard performer who, loud or quiet, always means business.

TOP TEN ALBUMS

- (1) *Let's Talk About Love* Celine Dion (Epic)
- (2) *Spiceworld* Spice Girls (Virgin)
- (3) *Urban Hymns* Verve (Hut)
- (4) *The Best of...* Wham! (Epic)
- (5) *All Saints* All Saints (London)
- (6) *Like You Do* Lightning Seeds (Epic)
- (7) *White on Blonde* Texas (Mercury)
- (8) *Paint the Sky with Stars* Enya (WEA)
- (9) *Greatest Hits* Eternal (EMI)
- (10) *Lennon Legend* John Lennon (Parlophone)

Copyright CYN Figure in brackets denotes last week's position

Plot defers to slide rule

Ever since they won their gold medal at the 1984 Winter Olympics in Sarajevo, Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean have etched themselves on our national consciousness with the magic of their ice dancing. They have been a working couple for more than 20 years, but if the romance of their artistic partnership is starting to fade, it certainly doesn't show. They still move in perfect harmony, with a physical and emotional rapport that is dazzling. And a good thing it is too. Because without that special magic their new show, *Ice Adventures*, would be an even bigger disappointment.

The show was choreographed by Torvill, Dean and Andris Toppe (who also directs). The fourth member of the creative team is Robin Driscoll, co-writer of television's *Mr. Bean*, who worked on the "concepts" of *Ice Adventures* with the other three. Concept is not this production's strong point.

Conceived as a series of unrelated episodes designed to provide the audience with a variety of easily digested moods, *Ice Adventures* aims low. It makes no attempt at drama or scenic development as theatre it's a bore. Even the visual comedy falls short of reasonable expectation, effective when sweetly humorous, but limp whenever broad strokes are called for.

The episodes are arbitrary. The first is set in a busy train station with couples meeting and parting (fun with lug-gag), the second features dancing sea creatures in an underwater ballet. Winter Games evokes the spirit of the

Olympics (sporting and not so sporting) and New Year's Eve, set in a "big city nightspot", provides the dancy finale. Torvill and Dean are the highlight of each segment, although the really flash manoeuvres are left to younger members of the cast. The stars from Nottingham have a company of fine skaters to support them — one, the exciting Richard Swenning, is a truly eye-catching performer. Torvill still covers the ice most gracefully, changing into the choreography with an undiminished thrill. But there is too little scope for expression in her upper body: neck and shoulders are stiff. Dean, meanwhile, has been taking his ballet lessons to heart. He feels the impulse in every part of his body, a supremely polished mover who puts it all together — be it jazz or slapstick — with consummate style and ease.

You do, however, get the feeling that Dean the choreographer is frustrated by the limitations of working on skates. His recent experience with English National Ballet, for whom he made *Encounters*, must have opened his eyes to a wider spectrum of movement possibilities. But any desire to feed the slide and twist of ice dancing with the fertility of classical ballet eventually confers on the capable reality: there is only so much you can do with the body when your feet are underscored by blades.

DEBRA CRAINE



Making magic: Christopher Dean and Jayne Torvill in their new show, *Ice Adventures*

CONCERTS: The stars come out in force for an anniversary show and a forceful Verdi Requiem

Crass touches mar the band's big night

Barbican (0171-638 8881) Clapham Picture House (0171-498 3322) Empire (01992-889900) Odeon Leicester (0115-255 4215) Screen Bakers Street (011-235 2772) Screen/Grange (011-225 5628) UCI Whiteleys (01992-889900) Virgin Chelsea (011-352 2071)

1. I KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST SUMMER (1981): Backer as teenagers get their comeuppance. Verbal horror from the writer of *Scream*. With John Heston, Freddie Prince Jr., Director: Jim Gillespie. Odeon Leicester (0115-255 4215) Clapham Picture House (0171-498 3322) Empire (01992-889900) UCI Whiteleys (01992-889900) Virgin Chelsea (011-352 2071)

2. TOMMY (1975): Roger Waters' rock opera. With Pete Dinklage, David Gilmour, Nick Mason, Chris Thomas. Director: Ken Russell. Odeon Leicester (0115-255 4215) Clapham Picture House (0171-498 3322) Empire (01992-889900) UCI Whiteleys (01992-889900) Virgin Chelsea (011-352 2071)

3. THE GODFATHER (1972): Al Pacino as the rise and fall of a crime boss. With Al Pacino, Al Pacino, Al Pacino. Director: Francis Ford Coppola. Odeon Leicester (0115-255 4215) Clapham Picture House (0171-498 3322) Empire (01992-889900) UCI Whiteleys (01992-889900) Virgin Chelsea (011-352 2071)

4. THE GODFATHER PART II (1973): Al Pacino as the rise and fall of a crime boss. With Al Pacino, Al Pacino, Al Pacino. Director: Francis Ford Coppola. Odeon Leicester (0115-255 4215) Clapham Picture House (0171-498 3322) Empire (01992-889900) UCI Whiteleys (01992-889900) Virgin Chelsea (011-352 2071)

5. THE GODFATHER PART III (1974): Al Pacino as the rise and fall of a crime boss. With Al Pacino, Al Pacino, Al Pacino. Director: Francis Ford Coppola. Odeon Leicester (0115-255 4215) Clapham Picture House (0171-498 3322) Empire (01992-889900) UCI Whiteleys (01992-889900) Virgin Chelsea (011-352 2071)

conductor, he confined himself to Elgar's *Enigma Variations*. He presented the "friends pictured within" like an album of musical sepias portraits for which an extra rehearsal session would not have gone amiss in securing better balance of textures. The second part brought what Becham would have called the "lollipops". First up was a Singapore violinist, Lee-Chin Slow, slim and svelte in a scarlet shawl. She teased out the glimmer of Sarasate's *Carmen Fantasy* with aplomb. Her volatile conductor was José Collado, who gave way to Marcello Rota to introduce the easy tenor of Andrea Bocelli. His vision was impaired from birth, and he lost his sight altogether at the age of 12, after a football accident. He sang a beguiling *La Strada* by Tosti and returned for a smooth but charming *La donna è mobile*, which he delivered a second time as a loudly demanding encore. Before that, Montserrat Caballé advanced like a galleon under full sail to sing three numbers, in which she miraculously managed to capture the sense of a young ingénue in *O mio babbino caro* from Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* and the lilting song of Paloma from Barber's *zuzuela*, *El barbero de Sevilla*. But then she demurred her stature by foisting on us a tacky tune by Vangelis, for which she herself had written English lyrics entitled *Like*

A Dream. The *Brindisi* from *La Traviata*, listed in the programme, never materialised — for which I am unsure whether to feel regret or relief. NOEL GOODWIN

THE second of James Levine's concerts with the Philharmonia Orchestra on Wednesday — sold out long ago — was always destined to be an event. In the first place, this performance of the Verdi Requiem marked the 40th anniversary of the Philharmonia Chorus. Secondly, it was the final concert of the long-serving bass player and former chairman, Rodney Stewart. It should, furthermore, have featured Luciano Pavarotti in an all-star line-up of soloists. He was too ill to travel, we were told, but his replacement was the less media-friendly Roberto Alagna. To cap it all, television cameras and royalty were in attendance, creating a buzz of anticipation even before the baton was raised. Almost any well-led performance of the Verdi Requiem — and the Philharmonia and City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus rehearsed by James Kelleher formed a massive

but commendably responsive vocal corps — is likely to make an impression. Levine hasn't been at the helm of the New York Metropolitan Opera for 25 years without acquiring a theatrical flair, and he pointed up contrasts with a practised ear for historic effect. The fury of the *Dies Irae*, for example, was intoxicating. When the score is marked "tutta forza", as in the final pages of the *Liberia me*, Levine knows what to do when more subtlety is called for, he is often found wanting. It was not until an hour into the piece that a fine shading of the *Agnus Dei* suggested anything out of the ordinary. The finest inspirations, in fact, came neither from the podium nor from the star tenor — Alagna's contributions were marked by coarse tone and lumpy line — but from the soprano soloist, Renée Fleming. Her phrasing was wonderfully expressive and she was able to suggest also the terror of imminent death and judgment in the *Liberia me* with the agitated delivery of her *parlando* opening. The mezzo and bass soloists, Luciana D'Intino and Roberto Scanduzzi, were not able to match that, but both managed to sustain a sensitively drawn musical line while invoking the sense of mystery. BARRY MILLINGTON

LONDON

CHORAL WONDERERS: A weekend of choral music to mark the centenary of the birth of Benjamin Britten. The choir of the Royal College of Music, conducted by Sir John Neschling, will perform Britten's *War Requiem* at the Royal Albert Hall on Sunday (19.12.97, 7.30pm). The choir will also perform Britten's *Mass in B minor* at the Royal Albert Hall on Saturday (18.12.97, 7.30pm). The choir will also perform Britten's *Mass in B minor* at the Royal Albert Hall on Sunday (19.12.97, 7.30pm).

WEEKEND CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Mark Hargreaves

ELSEWHERE

BLACKPOOL: The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra is joined by the RLP Choir and the Philharmonic Youth Choir for an evening of English traditional carols and Christmas music with seasonal readings from the works of Dickens and Lewis Carroll. Handel, Walton and Vaughan Williams are on the programme with audience participation invited for the carol singing. Grand Theatre, Church Street, 01253 25372. Sunday, 7.30pm.

LES DENNIS HEADS THE CAST OF ALADDIN, CARDIFF

THEATRE GUIDE

Jerome Kingston's assessment of theatre offerings in London

House full, returns only

Some seats available

Seats at all prices

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Return of Peter Hill's enjoyable production. Central of Deception. Starring Martin Shaw and Simon Ward. And Kate Challa as the sweet troublemaker. Grand Theatre, Church Street, 01253 25372. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

THE MAGISTRATE Ian Richardson plays the much harassed magistrate in a lively comedy. Central of Deception. Starring Martin Shaw and Simon Ward. And Kate Challa as the sweet troublemaker. Grand Theatre, Church Street, 01253 25372. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR Jonathan Kent directs Tom Hollander as the presumed inspector, Brian Murphy as his servant and Ian McDermott as the devious Mayor in Galsworthy's comic comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

HAILEY Alan Jennings plays the Prince in Matthew Warchus's production up from Stratford. With Debbie Coney as Ophelia. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

SATURDAY NIGHT World premiere of Sondheim's first musical. (The original was abandoned in the early 1950s when the producer died.)

CARDIFF: Celebrity turn-out and glamour host Les Dennis teams up with the former Olympic athlete, Les Dennis, to host the cast of *Aladdin*. A traditional family pantomime written and directed by Tudor Davis who also appears as Widow Twankey. New Theatre, Park Place, 01222 878880. Opens tomorrow, 2.30pm and 7pm. Then 2.30pm and 7pm most days. From Jan 7. 10pm and 7pm most days. No part Dec 25.

KING'S LYNN: Two performances here for American director Francesco Zambello's critically acclaimed new production for the Royal Opera. Royal Opera, 01223 333333. 19.12.97, 7.30pm. 20.12.97, 7.30pm.

NORTHAMPTON: Brian Blessed puts his comic talents to use as he gets to grips with the role of Hook in Malcolm Goldford's spectacular pantomime. Northampton, 01603 611111. 19.12.97, 7.30pm. 20.12.97, 7.30pm.

LONDON GALLERIES

British Museum Centre 1900-1939 0171-323 8829. 19.12.97, 10am-5pm. 20.12.97, 10am-5pm.

National Gallery's Manet A-Z 0171-747 2869. 19.12.97, 10am-5pm. 20.12.97, 10am-5pm.

Portrait of Sir Henry Rumbold Royal Academy, 0171-435 1435. 19.12.97, 10am-5pm. 20.12.97, 10am-5pm.

Portrait of Sir Henry Rumbold Royal Academy, 0171-435 1435. 19.12.97, 10am-5pm. 20.12.97, 10am-5pm.

Portrait of Sir Henry Rumbold Royal Academy, 0171-435 1435. 19.12.97, 10am-5pm. 20.12.97, 10am-5pm.

Portrait of Sir Henry Rumbold Royal Academy, 0171-435 1435. 19.12.97, 10am-5pm. 20.12.97, 10am-5pm.

Portrait of Sir Henry Rumbold Royal Academy, 0171-435 1435. 19.12.97, 10am-5pm. 20.12.97, 10am-5pm.

Portrait of Sir Henry Rumbold Royal Academy, 0171-435 1435. 19.12.97, 10am-5pm. 20.12.97, 10am-5pm.

ALL IN THE WRONG Paul Shaffer revisits the role of Sir John Falstaff in Arthur Murphy's excellent 18th-century romp. One of the theatre's best comedies. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

BUGGY MALONE The cast of the National Youth Music Theatre for the first time in the spotlight. A musical comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

A DELICATE BALANCE Eileen Atkins bursts into life in a comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR Jonathan Kent directs Tom Hollander as the presumed inspector, Brian Murphy as his servant and Ian McDermott as the devious Mayor in Galsworthy's comic comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

HAILEY Alan Jennings plays the Prince in Matthew Warchus's production up from Stratford. With Debbie Coney as Ophelia. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

SATURDAY NIGHT World premiere of Sondheim's first musical. (The original was abandoned in the early 1950s when the producer died.)

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Return of Peter Hill's enjoyable production. Central of Deception. Starring Martin Shaw and Simon Ward. And Kate Challa as the sweet troublemaker. Grand Theatre, Church Street, 01253 25372. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

THE MAGISTRATE Ian Richardson plays the much harassed magistrate in a lively comedy. Central of Deception. Starring Martin Shaw and Simon Ward. And Kate Challa as the sweet troublemaker. Grand Theatre, Church Street, 01253 25372. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR Jonathan Kent directs Tom Hollander as the presumed inspector, Brian Murphy as his servant and Ian McDermott as the devious Mayor in Galsworthy's comic comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

HAILEY Alan Jennings plays the Prince in Matthew Warchus's production up from Stratford. With Debbie Coney as Ophelia. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

SATURDAY NIGHT World premiere of Sondheim's first musical. (The original was abandoned in the early 1950s when the producer died.)

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Return of Peter Hill's enjoyable production. Central of Deception. Starring Martin Shaw and Simon Ward. And Kate Challa as the sweet troublemaker. Grand Theatre, Church Street, 01253 25372. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

ALL IN THE WRONG Paul Shaffer revisits the role of Sir John Falstaff in Arthur Murphy's excellent 18th-century romp. One of the theatre's best comedies. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

BUGGY MALONE The cast of the National Youth Music Theatre for the first time in the spotlight. A musical comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

A DELICATE BALANCE Eileen Atkins bursts into life in a comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR Jonathan Kent directs Tom Hollander as the presumed inspector, Brian Murphy as his servant and Ian McDermott as the devious Mayor in Galsworthy's comic comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

HAILEY Alan Jennings plays the Prince in Matthew Warchus's production up from Stratford. With Debbie Coney as Ophelia. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

SATURDAY NIGHT World premiere of Sondheim's first musical. (The original was abandoned in the early 1950s when the producer died.)

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Return of Peter Hill's enjoyable production. Central of Deception. Starring Martin Shaw and Simon Ward. And Kate Challa as the sweet troublemaker. Grand Theatre, Church Street, 01253 25372. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

THE MAGISTRATE Ian Richardson plays the much harassed magistrate in a lively comedy. Central of Deception. Starring Martin Shaw and Simon Ward. And Kate Challa as the sweet troublemaker. Grand Theatre, Church Street, 01253 25372. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR Jonathan Kent directs Tom Hollander as the presumed inspector, Brian Murphy as his servant and Ian McDermott as the devious Mayor in Galsworthy's comic comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

HAILEY Alan Jennings plays the Prince in Matthew Warchus's production up from Stratford. With Debbie Coney as Ophelia. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

SATURDAY NIGHT World premiere of Sondheim's first musical. (The original was abandoned in the early 1950s when the producer died.)

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Return of Peter Hill's enjoyable production. Central of Deception. Starring Martin Shaw and Simon Ward. And Kate Challa as the sweet troublemaker. Grand Theatre, Church Street, 01253 25372. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

ALL IN THE WRONG Paul Shaffer revisits the role of Sir John Falstaff in Arthur Murphy's excellent 18th-century romp. One of the theatre's best comedies. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

BUGGY MALONE The cast of the National Youth Music Theatre for the first time in the spotlight. A musical comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

A DELICATE BALANCE Eileen Atkins bursts into life in a comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR Jonathan Kent directs Tom Hollander as the presumed inspector, Brian Murphy as his servant and Ian McDermott as the devious Mayor in Galsworthy's comic comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

HAILEY Alan Jennings plays the Prince in Matthew Warchus's production up from Stratford. With Debbie Coney as Ophelia. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

SATURDAY NIGHT World premiere of Sondheim's first musical. (The original was abandoned in the early 1950s when the producer died.)

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Return of Peter Hill's enjoyable production. Central of Deception. Starring Martin Shaw and Simon Ward. And Kate Challa as the sweet troublemaker. Grand Theatre, Church Street, 01253 25372. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

THE MAGISTRATE Ian Richardson plays the much harassed magistrate in a lively comedy. Central of Deception. Starring Martin Shaw and Simon Ward. And Kate Challa as the sweet troublemaker. Grand Theatre, Church Street, 01253 25372. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR Jonathan Kent directs Tom Hollander as the presumed inspector, Brian Murphy as his servant and Ian McDermott as the devious Mayor in Galsworthy's comic comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

HAILEY Alan Jennings plays the Prince in Matthew Warchus's production up from Stratford. With Debbie Coney as Ophelia. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

SATURDAY NIGHT World premiere of Sondheim's first musical. (The original was abandoned in the early 1950s when the producer died.)

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Return of Peter Hill's enjoyable production. Central of Deception. Starring Martin Shaw and Simon Ward. And Kate Challa as the sweet troublemaker. Grand Theatre, Church Street, 01253 25372. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

ALL IN THE WRONG Paul Shaffer revisits the role of Sir John Falstaff in Arthur Murphy's excellent 18th-century romp. One of the theatre's best comedies. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

BUGGY MALONE The cast of the National Youth Music Theatre for the first time in the spotlight. A musical comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

A DELICATE BALANCE Eileen Atkins bursts into life in a comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR Jonathan Kent directs Tom Hollander as the presumed inspector, Brian Murphy as his servant and Ian McDermott as the devious Mayor in Galsworthy's comic comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

HAILEY Alan Jennings plays the Prince in Matthew Warchus's production up from Stratford. With Debbie Coney as Ophelia. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

SATURDAY NIGHT World premiere of Sondheim's first musical. (The original was abandoned in the early 1950s when the producer died.)

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Return of Peter Hill's enjoyable production. Central of Deception. Starring Martin Shaw and Simon Ward. And Kate Challa as the sweet troublemaker. Grand Theatre, Church Street, 01253 25372. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

THE MAGISTRATE Ian Richardson plays the much harassed magistrate in a lively comedy. Central of Deception. Starring Martin Shaw and Simon Ward. And Kate Challa as the sweet troublemaker. Grand Theatre, Church Street, 01253 25372. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR Jonathan Kent directs Tom Hollander as the presumed inspector, Brian Murphy as his servant and Ian McDermott as the devious Mayor in Galsworthy's comic comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

HAILEY Alan Jennings plays the Prince in Matthew Warchus's production up from Stratford. With Debbie Coney as Ophelia. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

SATURDAY NIGHT World premiere of Sondheim's first musical. (The original was abandoned in the early 1950s when the producer died.)

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Return of Peter Hill's enjoyable production. Central of Deception. Starring Martin Shaw and Simon Ward. And Kate Challa as the sweet troublemaker. Grand Theatre, Church Street, 01253 25372. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

ALL IN THE WRONG Paul Shaffer revisits the role of Sir John Falstaff in Arthur Murphy's excellent 18th-century romp. One of the theatre's best comedies. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

BUGGY MALONE The cast of the National Youth Music Theatre for the first time in the spotlight. A musical comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

A DELICATE BALANCE Eileen Atkins bursts into life in a comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR Jonathan Kent directs Tom Hollander as the presumed inspector, Brian Murphy as his servant and Ian McDermott as the devious Mayor in Galsworthy's comic comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

HAILEY Alan Jennings plays the Prince in Matthew Warchus's production up from Stratford. With Debbie Coney as Ophelia. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

SATURDAY NIGHT World premiere of Sondheim's first musical. (The original was abandoned in the early 1950s when the producer died.)

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Return of Peter Hill's enjoyable production. Central of Deception. Starring Martin Shaw and Simon Ward. And Kate Challa as the sweet troublemaker. Grand Theatre, Church Street, 01253 25372. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

THE MAGISTRATE Ian Richardson plays the much harassed magistrate in a lively comedy. Central of Deception. Starring Martin Shaw and Simon Ward. And Kate Challa as the sweet troublemaker. Grand Theatre, Church Street, 01253 25372. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR Jonathan Kent directs Tom Hollander as the presumed inspector, Brian Murphy as his servant and Ian McDermott as the devious Mayor in Galsworthy's comic comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

HAILEY Alan Jennings plays the Prince in Matthew Warchus's production up from Stratford. With Debbie Coney as Ophelia. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

SATURDAY NIGHT World premiere of Sondheim's first musical. (The original was abandoned in the early 1950s when the producer died.)

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Return of Peter Hill's enjoyable production. Central of Deception. Starring Martin Shaw and Simon Ward. And Kate Challa as the sweet troublemaker. Grand Theatre, Church Street, 01253 25372. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

ALL IN THE WRONG Paul Shaffer revisits the role of Sir John Falstaff in Arthur Murphy's excellent 18th-century romp. One of the theatre's best comedies. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

BUGGY MALONE The cast of the National Youth Music Theatre for the first time in the spotlight. A musical comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

A DELICATE BALANCE Eileen Atkins bursts into life in a comedy. Royal National Theatre, 01753 366100. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 3pm and Sat 4pm.

THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR Jonathan Kent directs Tom Hollander as the presumed inspector, Brian

The deficit is falling and economy growing, but job creation is the biggest battle. Giles Tremlett introduces a two-page report from Madrid

After spending much of the 1990s in the doldrums, Spain's economy is enjoying the kind of recovery that would make it the envy of Europe were it not also accompanied by chronic unemployment.

José María Aznar's conservative Government has made liberalisation and deficit-cutting the cornerstones of an economic programme that seeks sustained growth that's at least beginning to trim the country's 21 per cent unemployment rate.

The austerity measures have done little to weaken Señor Aznar, even though he leads a minority Government, because he has made Spanish membership of European Monetary Union his main economic aim.

Spaniards of almost all political colours are keen Europeans. All the major parties agree that membership of monetary union is vital to the country's economic aspirations, even if tough measures are needed to get it past the conditions for entry. Few economists would have predicted it two years ago, but there is now little doubt that Spain will qualify comfortably.

Señor Aznar's main target has been the public deficit. This has been slashed from 6.6 per cent in 1995 to what is expected to be slightly less than 3 per cent this year. He

Winning the war against inflation and dole queues

aims to get it below 2 per cent before the millennium.

Restrictions on government spending, including a freeze on civil service pay, have been crucial to meeting these targets. Increased economic growth, which reached an estimated 3 per cent this year, and a raft of privatisations have contributed greatly. Inflation has also been tamed, dipping below 2 per cent earlier this year. The Bank of Spain has felt confident enough to cut interest rates from 6.25 to 4.75 per cent.

Señor Aznar has now decided to ease the public spending belt, allowing it to grow by 3.2 per cent in 1998. Even then, the Prime Minister, worried that he might look too keen to spend, trimmed £100 million from the budget before finally

presenting it to Parliament.

"This is no longer a budget for the euro, it is a budget for recovery," Finance Minister Rodrigo Rato declared when he presented the Government's plans for 1998. Señor

"This is no longer a budget for the euro, it is a budget for recovery"

Rato's predictions for 1998 included 3.4 per cent growth and a 2.4 per cent deficit.

Consumers, initially suspicious of the export-led recovery, finally started to dip into their pockets in 1997. Business is optimistic. A December poll of the country's major companies by *El País* newspaper

found that 83 per cent expected to increase sales next year.

Señor Aznar has proved a keen privatiser. Recent sell-offs have included large parts of monopoly phone company Telefónica, petrochemical giant Repsol, electricity supplier Endesa and steelmaker Aceralía. These flotations have had the additional effect of encouraging a number of successful private companies, notably the Telepizza restaurant chain and the Adolfo Domínguez clothing stores, to float shares on Madrid's stock market, *La Bolsa*.

Señor Aznar's Government has been clearly interventionist in the media sector, where a bitter political battle is being fought between two new pay-per-view digital television providers, *Via Digital* and Canal

Satélite Digital. The Government controls a stake in *Via Digital* through state broadcaster TVE. Its attempts to favour *Via Digital* against Canal Satélite Digital, owned by the pro-Socialist media magnate Jesús de Polanco, have earned it warnings from the European Commission.

Analysts predict that Señor Aznar has a lot more work to do before he can claim to have knocked the economy properly into shape. The head of the Prime Minister's budget office, José Barea, admits that both the state pensions scheme and the social security system are expensive time bombs waiting to explode.

Labour reform is the other great challenge. A deal between unions and employers in April went some way to making the labour market more flexible in a country that boasted the EU's most expensive redundancies. These had caused employers to shy away from contracting people for permanent jobs, leaving a third of workers on temporary contracts. Señor Rato has recognised that further reform is inevitable.

A combination of economic expansion and labour deregulation is chipping away at unemployment, with dole queues being shortened by 6 per cent over a year. At 21.55 per cent, it remains Señor Aznar's biggest challenge.



Flashback to 1996: civil servants protest in Barcelona at a freeze on pay and cutbacks

Share selloff frenzy for the small investor

PRIVATISATION

Although many Spaniards are currently suffering a nasty strain of flu, the real epidemic is popular capitalism infected by the current wave of privatisations. Analysis has been staggered by the enthusiasm of private investors in Spain who have snapped up government offerings with a gusto normally reserved for tickets in *El Gordo*, Spain's gigantic £1 billion Christmas lottery.

This year the Government will have raised £7 billion from 17 sell-offs in Spain and three in South America. The biggest offering was completed in September with the sale of 26 per cent of Endesa, an electrical utility, which raised a record £2.8 billion, with 65 per cent coming from small Spanish investors.

"It was the largest ever offering in Spain, and the seventh biggest ever in Europe," boasts Emilio Saracho, managing director of Santander Investment, part of Banco Santander, which handled the launch.

Santander Investment has pioneered successful state sales since 1985, with increasingly larger offerings. It has 3,000 employees with 300 dedicated full time to equities, comfortably matching better-known London houses. Señor Saracho, 42, said there were two million applications from Spaniards for Endesa shares and he reckons there is a hard core of some 300,000 regular buyers in Spain.

These days most Spanish banks are festooned with details of share offers. Private buyers snatched up 73 per cent — a new record — of part of the first tranche in Aceralía, a steel group of which most of them had probably never heard.

Analysts credit shrewd work by the Government, and in particular the Sept state holding group, in tailoring issues for timely release as well as indirect help from the Maastricht treaty. Spain's ardent ambition to comply with the Maastricht criteria to join the first EU states with the euro has brought about a

reduction in both interest rates and the budget deficit.

Superficially, the state auction could be seen as an easy way — prohibited by Maastricht — of directly reducing the state deficit. But, cunningly, the funds raised by Sept go towards bailing out loss-making companies in, say, shipping and mining, thus eliminating subsidies.

The Government says the privatisation programme, involving about 40 companies, is basically aimed at making industries more efficient, guaranteeing their futures and, hopefully, more jobs for Europe's longest dole queue. And the reason why the new shareholder culture has mushroomed is because lower interest rates, as stipulated by Maastricht, have dictated a switch from fixed-rate bonds to more profitable equities.

Just a few years ago only about 10 or 15 per cent of sell-offs attracted the public, but now private demand has outstripped that from institutional investors. But Señor Saracho points out that some of the new Spanish equities have more to offer the likes of foreign pension funds than most other European stocks.

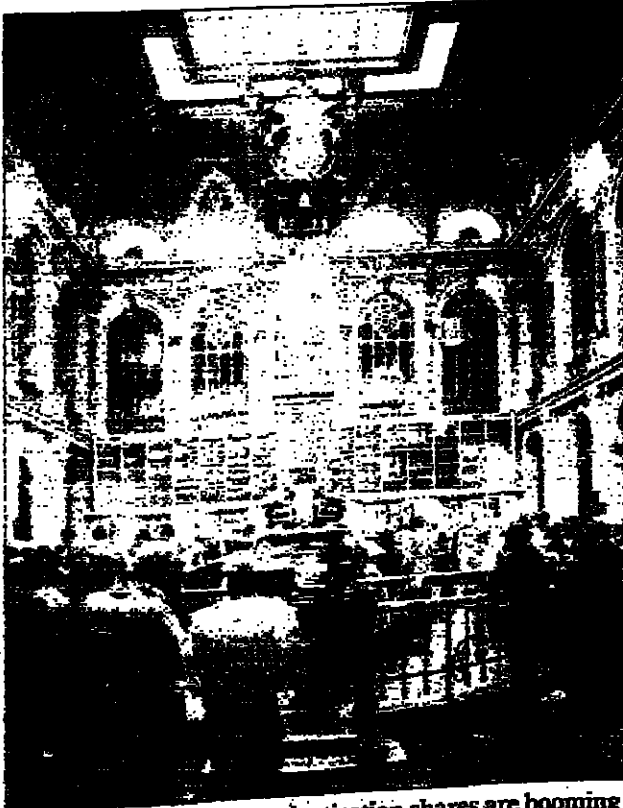
"Many of the privatisations, such as Telefónica, Repsol (the petroleum group) and Endesa, constitute an indirect but safe play in Latin America," he says. "It's a good way of buying solid investments with a good name in Europe, but with potentially exciting exposure across the Atlantic."

"In Spain the market for electricity is growing by 1 or 2 per cent a year, whereas in South America, where Endesa now controls Enersis of Chile, it is 7 per cent."

Next February Santander expects to be global co-ordinator for 28 per cent of Argentina, the banking group, the last 20 per cent of Endesa in May and may be later involved with the sale of 52 per cent of Tabacalera, the state tobacco monopoly.

EDWARD OWEN

J. PAULOVSKI/STYOMA



Madrid's stock market privatisation shares are booming

The fourth largest European airline.



Iberia is the fourth largest European airline, because day after day,

more than 22,000 people try their hardest. We have over 30 destinations

in Spain and more than 20 in Latin America. We also have one of the

world's most modern fleets, the world's biggest shuttle service and

over 70 years experience flying.

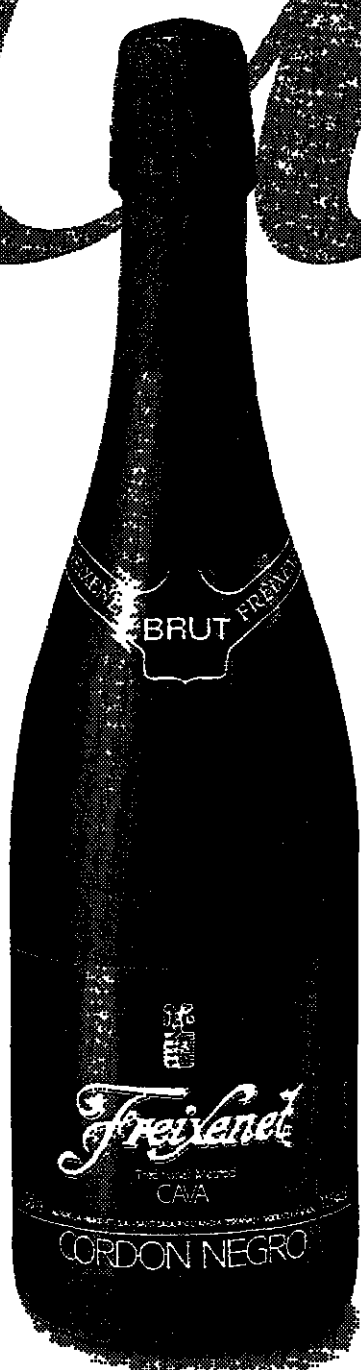
We've become Europe's fourth largest airline and we'd like to be the

airline of your choice when it comes to Spain and Latin America.

WINES FROM

SPAIN

any time you like



A glass of cool, delicious Freixenet turns any occasion into a sparkling experience. Whether you're relaxing at home, dropping in for dinner, or just getting together with friends, you know you deserve to celebrate...
...so why wait until Christmas Day?

Freixenet

MAKES IT HAPPEN

<http://www.freixenet.com>

هكذا من الأهل

Giles Tremlett looks at the strengths of Spain's new leaders as the ghosts of 40 years of Franco's dictatorship are being laid to rest

Aznar's conservatives move leftwards

Under José María Aznar, the conservative Prime Minister, Spain is living through a period of political novelty. Before his Popular Party's election victory in March last year most Spaniards had no experience of life under a democratic right-wing Government.

Bitter memories of nearly 40 years of dictatorship under General Franco had caused Spaniards to shun the Right after democracy was re-established when the *caudillo* died in 1975. Señor Aznar's election win finally broke the taboo.

One of his main challenges, then, has been to chase away the ghosts of the past and prove that there is no reason to be afraid of his right-wing Government. The Prime Minister has taken great pains to do this. He has moved his party towards the centre and has strenuously avoided confrontation with two of his potentially most powerful adversaries, the trade unions and regionalist parties.

In the latter case he has little choice. His victory was not as resounding as the polls had predicted. The Popular Party fell short of winning an absolute majority and had to form a minority Government supported by regionalist parties from Catalonia, the Basque country and the Canary Islands.

This left Señor Aznar's Government hostage to the Catalan regionalist Prime Minister, Jordi Pujol. A withdrawal of support by Señor Pujol's regionalist *Convergència i Unió* Party would immediately force fresh elections.

The alliance between Señor Aznar, Señor Pujol and the other regionalist parties is, in many ways, unnatural. Where the Popular Party is naturally centrist, the regionalist parties want power devolved to Spain's 17 autonomous

Politics

regional governments. This is especially the case with the Catalans and the Basque Nationalist Party. Señor Aznar has had to take a crash course in the political and cultural desires of his new allies. He has satisfied demands for decentralisation by speeding up the transfer of powers to regional governments. This, for example, has seen the Basques gain increased power over tax rates, while the Catalans have won a financing deal.

The Prime Minister has found



Socialist leader Almunia

plenty of common ground with his allies on the economic front. This has been especially so with Señor Pujol. His party, which represents Catalonia's industrious middle classes, puts the economy ahead of regionalist demands.

A common desire to join the European single currency has provided the basic cement for Señor Aznar's alliance with the regionalists. Spain's booming economy, now growing at 3 per cent, and the

Government's liberal approach to it have added further glue.

But tensions remain. The Basques, for example, do not see eye to eye with Javier Mayor Oreja, the Interior Minister, and dislike his policy towards separatist group Eta, which continues to carry out up to a dozen assassinations each year. They want dialogue and a softening of the prisons policy, which sends Eta activists to jails outside the Basque country.

Señor Mayor Oreja has ruled out talks with Eta's political ally, the Herri Batasuna Party, until the violence stops. Eta has responded by targeting Popular Party members. Its June kidnapping and murder of Miguel Angel Blanco, a young Popular Party councillor from the Basque town of Erma, brought millions out in protest. It also brought promises of a tougher line on Eta. Señor Mayor Oreja's calm, firm handling of the situation has won him widespread support and made him Señor Aznar's most popular minister.

Relations with the *Convergencia* Party are relatively stable, and Señor Pujol's support looks set to hold up through 1998. But here, too, there are occasional flare-ups. The most recent arose over teaching the humanities in schools.

The proposal by education minister Esperanza Aguirre that schools should teach the 'unitary nature' of Spanish history and geography caused outrage in Señor Pujol's regional government, which sees little historical unity between Spain and Catalonia.

The much-heralded clash with the trade unions has failed to take place, partly because the Prime Minister has renounced many of the labour and social security reforms that his advisers say are urgent. It is also because unions



Ploughing ahead: although he leads a minority Government, José María Aznar's policies and diplomacy are paying dividends

preferred to reach an agreement with employers allowing for a degree of liberalisation of the labour market rather than confront the Government while it pursued the popular goal of qualifying for monetary union.

Señor Aznar's relatively gentle first 18 months in office have been helped by upheavals in the main opposition party, the Spanish Socialist Workers Party. Under the charismatic leadership of Felipe

González, the Socialists had held government for 13 years until 1996.

Señor González was eventually brought down by security and corruption scandals, which are only just beginning to be processed through the sluggish court system. In the first big case to reach a conclusion, six former members of the party's finance team were jailed for illegal fund-raising.

The Socialists, who have a new leader in Joaquín Almunia, are

thus still on the defensive. They will remain so while the courts investigate further corruption cases and the role Señor González's Government played in a dirty undercover war against Eta suspects in which 28 people died.

Despite the apparent successes of his first few months in government, many Spaniards still do not warm to Señor Aznar, who rarely beats Señor González in polls on personal popularity. This has much to do

with the grey, introverted image of this 44-year-old former tax inspector, which contrasts strongly with his predecessor's charisma.

The Left not only did not believe Señor Aznar would become Prime Minister, it also refused to believe that, if he did manage to get elected, he would be a success. Yet his Popular Party continues to lead the polls.

Spain, it seems, has laid to rest the ghosts of the Right.

TOURISM

The impact of the euro on Spain's largest industry — tourism — is certain to be considerable, *Edward Owen* writes. The minister responsible for the sector, José Manuel Fernández Norniella, is vigorously engaged in trying to brace businessmen and government officials in readiness for its introduction.

Since Spain cannot maintain the benefits of favourable exchange rates, it will have to be more competitive, with the emphasis on quality and value for money. From 1999, many EU tourists, getting used to the euro in their own countries, will for the first time know exactly how much anything costs in Spain without having to resort to a pocket calculator.

Tourism, which accounts for 10.4 per cent of gross domestic product, continues to break all records, but the new regime responsible for national policy is far from complacent. The Treasury has earmarked £4.6 million to tell the industry what the euro is all about. But tourist businesses are seeking more money to offset the additional costs they anticipate of launching the euro, including loss of foreign exchange commissions.

Señor Fernández Norniella, 52, Secretary of State for Commerce, Tourism and Smaller Businesses, has also established various bodies to co-ordinate tourism policies after their devolution to the regions by the previous Socialist administration. He has reversed the latter's policy to sell part of the state-run *Parador* hotel chain. This year tourism is expected to bring £15 billion to Spain. Last year, the country received 62 million foreign visitors, of whom 41.4 million stayed overnight and are



Fernández Norniella, inset, and Ronda, which has a new *Parador* on top of the gorge

£44m Parador boost for new visitor boom

therefore categorised as tourists. Nearly 60 per cent of tourists came on package holidays.

"The important difference between our policy and that of the previous Government is that we are maximising collaboration and communication between Madrid and tourist sectors at all regional levels," says Señor Fernández Norniella. "At a Madrid congress of all regions and tourist enterprises we adopted 23 concrete conclusions which will be acted upon."

One concerns the impact on tourism of the euro in 1999. Visitors who drive will be pleased to know that

standard signposting is planned across the country. This should eliminate the need for knowing the often incomprehensible Basque names for destinations in northern Spain or realising that a sign in Galician saying "A Coruña" literally means "The Corunna" rather than "To Corunna".

Tourist chiefs also want to remedy one of the most frequent complaints about Spanish tourist offices: that they hardly ever carry literature on regions other than their own. One of the worst offenders is the tourist counter at Madrid's airport and the city's bureaux.

Hopefully, officials will also improve often woeful standard of translations.

The Socialist Government had plans to sell off at least some of Spain's fine state-run chain of *Parador* hotels, mostly in restored castles, monasteries and convents in areas of great beauty. Señor Fernández Norniella has not only reversed that decision but will invest £44 million to the year 2000 in opening new *Paradores* in historic buildings and further restoration of existing ones.

"This year the *Paradores* have beaten all records, and the trend is the same for next year," he says. "They are unique to Spain. There's no other country that can offer a hotel chain with such a combination of artistic and cultural heritage. *Paradores* are a good way of preserving our rich inheritance and they attract a special type of tourism, often bringing business to rural areas." Next year discounts will be offered on various routes linking the *Parador* network.

WINE

Export demand for Spanish wines has risen since overall quality has dramatically improved, *Edward Owen* writes. Spain has finally produced a good argument against EU bureaucrats who have ordered the country to rip up vines from 1,300 square miles, an area larger than Luxembourg.

Spain has more land dedicated to the grape than any other country in the world, but is the third-ranked wine producer, behind Italy and France. In the past six years the value of wine exports from Spain have increased by nearly 60 per cent and last year were worth £600 million, with Britain a major customer.

Jesús Flores, president of the Spanish Association of Sommeliers, says there has been a revolution in Spanish wine-making: "Spanish oenologists are following consumer demand. Tastes have changed. *Tintos* [red wines] are more corpulent, more suave, with less tannin and more of a fruity flavour. "Great wines are designed on the vine and new clones of grapes are being grafted in Spain. But the great strength of Spanish wine is still the relation between price and quality."

He says that *tintos* now have more body. "We are looking for more colour and the fruity character is more important, as is the appropriate choice of wood for ageing in barrels. More importance is now attached to fermentation of whites in the barrel and self-fermenting yeasts. The process is more sophisticated than before."

Of *cavas*, Spain's *methode champenoise* sparkling wines, the best of which taste as good as champagnes but are cheaper, Señor Flores



Jesús Flores: "The strength of Spanish wine is the relation between price and quality"

Tasty sales figures as quality rises

comments: "The major brands have set aside their war with each other and are consolidating their *cavas* into sparkling wines of real quality."

Almost all *cavas* are produced in Catalonia, northeast Spain, mainly from local *Parellada*, *Macabeo* and *Xarel·lo* grapes. The two biggest producers are Codorniu and Freixenet. The latter exports the most.

Manuel Duran, vice-president of Freixenet, says he exported 55 million bottles in the first nine months of this year, a six million increase on the same period last year. Britons uncorked nearly five

million bottles of the fizz. Señor Duran approves of Britons and Germans drinking his *cava* all year round, complaining that Spaniards really seem to drink it only at Christmas.

José Ferrer, 72, president of the family-owned Freixenet, has just announced a £21 million expansion plan for his company, which had a turnover of £187.5 million last year. The economic climate was good for expansion. He says: "Profits are greater. Consumption has moderately increased in the domestic market and exports have been extraordinary. Interest rates have dropped, as have

the costs of raw materials."

The bodega, located in the *cava* capital of San Sadurni, 40 miles south of Barcelona, was founded in 1889 and first produced *cava* in 1915. The huge cellars go down seven storeys and contain 100 million bottles.

Señor Flores, who is also a director of Spain's largest wine club, *Vino* selection, which has 33,000 members, recommends the following for those who want a Spanish flavour at Christmas. As an *aperitivo*, he suggests a chilled *Tio Pepe* *fino* sherry. Freixenet's Brut Nature or Codorniu's Anna de Codorniu. For a red, he chooses an "elegant" *Pesquera Crianza* 1994 from the Ribera del Duero region made from *Tempranillo* grapes.

His preferred white comes from neighbouring Rueda, a "fresh, dry" *Sauz* 1996 made from 100 per cent *Vendaje*. To accompany coffee he goes for *Lepanto* brandy from Jerez — "non-aggressive and silky".



White towns, black economy: some of the world's finest leather designer-label goods are made in the hills of Andalusia

Hide and chic is the name of the game

Edward Owen discovers why one does not usually see the word 'Ubrique' embossed on designer leather goods

Nestling in a fold of the mountains of Grazalema National Park in central Andalusia lies the whitewashed town of Ubrique, where a semi-clandestine industry provides for the world's discerning rich.

Visitors venturing off the new bypass might notice more than the usual number of shops selling leather goods. But few would realise that this unassuming town annually manufactures and mostly exports about £60 million worth of the finest leather bags, luggage and fashion accessories. These are made to order by, and embossed in the name of, the world's top fashion houses.

Ubrique produces a quarter of Spain's leather products and consumes so many top-quality hides that 80 per cent have to be imported. So why the secrecy? And why has the local town hall built a new bullring rather than a centre to promote its fine craft?

The answer lies in the acute rivalry among its manufacturers and the widespread use of unofficial labour. Without doubt, Ubrique is a major statistic in Spain's submerged economy. But it is also becoming respectable.

"We have a population of 18,300 and officially there are only 1,500 working in the industry. But really there are between 5,000 and 6,000 in it — someone in every home," admits Ubrique's mayor, Juan Ignacio Calvo, a 43-year-old maths teacher. He is embarrassed that the town's name is often omitted from the designer labels on its fine leather work, but that is the price — for cheap but highly skilled labour — it has to pay. "It's a type of licence from Loewe or Christian Dior or Gucci, which we respect," he says. But he believes it is now time for local designers to promote Ubrique in its own right.

The origins of the centuries-old business came from the livestock that grazed on the rich grass of the mountains — Grazalema has Spain's highest rainfall — and the lack of crags, which can damage hides. The first artisans fashioned the fine leather into *petacas*, tobacco cases and pouches for smugglers and bandits. A folding case made for farmers' livestock documents is

EXPORTS

arguably the forerunner of the wallet.

Soon the fame of the fine, strong sewing of Ubrique's leather spread and demand increased. Until recently the town was infamous for selling copies of designer handbags for a fraction of their actual prices in the Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré or Bond Street. But now the famous fashion houses themselves contract Ubrique's skills. And the wealth obtained from piracy has bought respectability. Well-educated offspring have taken on family factories and invested in state-of-the-art machines.

Victoria Coronil is the young, engaging boss of MCM, which makes bags mainly for Christian Dior. Her grandfather sold his leather goods from a tray at the 1929 World's Fair in nearby Seville. He progressed to exporting crocodile wallets to America, boxes for gambling games and holsters for

the military. Her father established contracts with Christian Dior, Dunhill and Paco Rabanne in the early 1980s.

Now MCM's production is divided between Dior and Coronil's own line. "Everyone here learns how to work with leather from their childhood," explains Señora Coronil, who flits between Tokyo, Hong Kong, Paris and Germany. "Our turnover has trebled in the past four years."

As a child, Ana Camargo started making doll clothes from bits of leather left over in her father's factory. Now, as Mardo & Camargo, she sells the softest of leather clothes and chic bags around the world. "We should not just love the prestige of famous fashion houses but should push Ubrique as 'Made in Spain' as well," she enthuses.

An evening stroll in the maze of Ubrique's steep, narrow, cobbled streets, where bougainvillea, jasmine, geraniums and topatoes

grow, reveals the real extent of the industry. Follow the tapping noises and one finds families gathered around tables at home making bits of wallets and handbags on marble slabs. The air is sickly with glue.

In a tiny workshop, Cristóbal, Francisco and Pepe, all in their thirties, expertly fold and glue dyed leather strips to be factory-sewn into wallets. "I can earn £200 pounds a month. We work for different companies," he says, dabbing his fingers into more glue, which he calls, with the lisp of Andalusian accent, "thuper".

Antonio León is general secretary of the manufacturers' association representing 300 entities. "The Far East and India will never match our handiwork," he says. "Now more and more fashion houses, such as Nina Ricci, are embossing 'Made in Spain' but 50 per cent of our exports are resold from France."

The new bullring? Ubrique is not shy about its other "industry": a bullfighter called Jesulín de Ubrique, who has achieved popular status. He can afford to buy a handbag that sells for £1,000 in Paris but can cost a tenth of the price in Ubrique, where it is made.

EDUCATION



David Blunkett with guide dog Lucy and young carollers from St Matthew's Church of England Primary School in Westminster

Joyful and triumphant

What makes a good school carol service? The end of this, the longest term, is greeted with gleeful anticipation by the staff and pupils. Staff, parents and pupils wait with differing emotions in the silence which precedes the first verse of *Once in Royal David's City*. Is it going to come this year from a *wunderkind* with a recording contract underneath his surplice, or a press-ganged and nervous heavy breather?

If you ask a retired head teacher what they miss most about their school, they are quite likely to say "chapel" or "assembly". If you ask a pupil which is the most tedious part of school life, they will probably volunteer the same answer. The chorister caught reading *Private Eye* during a long service at Wells Cathedral may have lost his liveli-

Pupils may grumble but the school carol service is a fine tradition, says Anne Lee

hood for his sins, but he will have the sympathy of every choirboy in the country. For choristers too young to appreciate *Private Eye*, the current favourite activity is making models out of Blu-Tack, which sometimes bear a remarkable resemblance to members of staff.

Carol services reveal the hidden agendas in a school more clearly than any other "state occasion". It is possible to discover who's who by scanning the order of service to see who is reading the lesson and when. Do past pupils take part? Are school governors included and do they attend? How many pupils read and take part? How traditional is the service and does the head or the chairman of governors read

that final, mystical lesson from John? One of the kindest gestures I have seen was when a member of the administrative staff was asked to read a lesson. Often they are the unsung heroes of a school. At their best, schools are communities which act like large families. The carol service is their Christmas meal. Some schools go to great trouble to include the wider community. Malvern College invites "the town" to its service; and Queenswood School welcomes handicapped people involved in its community service programme.

The choice of music is telling. Some schools never dare risk the wrath of their establishment by departing from the full nine lessons and carols. Others proceed at a

pace and have managed the whole affair within half an hour.

Many music masters seize the opportunity to demonstrate their pupils' prowess to a captive audience, the entire school orchestra arrives and the service becomes more like an annual concert.

One of the most moving events I attended was an international carol service at which music from places as far apart as Africa and Poland marked the climax of a year when many cultures had been celebrated. This appropriately and symbolically marked the end of some international bullying in the sixth form.

Are the prayers real or of the "moving lips" variety? Some carol services are now so multi-faith that they are barely Christian, but they are still about hope and joy and community. They mark a time for forgiveness — and even though pupils moan, they recognise the value of the ceremony.

Margaret Tulloch questions Government priorities

Parent power, or just a Bill full of hot air?

Governments must find parents a mixed blessing. The previous Government often claimed that its education policies were made on behalf of parents, but this wrapping up in the parental banner became less noticeable as it became clear that many parents wanted not only greater accountability and information but smaller classes, roofs repaired and to keep their schools within the Local Education Authority network.

David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment, is rightly proud that 3,500 parents responded to his consultation leaflets in supermarkets last summer. He was heartened that their priorities matched those of the Government: smaller class sizes, rising standards of numeracy and literacy and stronger links between schools and parents.

When his School Standards and Framework Bill was published, he said it would give parents a "stronger role in their children's education". Home-school contracts would define parents' duties and responsibilities, and those of the school; parents would have more places on school governing bodies and a greater say on local education committees.

Just before the Bill was published, the Department for Education and Employment hosted a conference to launch an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development report on "parents as partners in schooling". This research provides a thorough analysis of parental involvement in nine OECD countries and puts the proposed legislation in context.

The OECD report said: "Governments should not always assume that parents want what they want. A parental agenda needs to be identified by a very broad consultation". The supermarket leaflets did not ask specifically for views on the Government's White

Paper proposals. No doubt during the passage of the Bill, which gets its second reading on Monday, a more detailed analysis will emerge of what these 3,500 parents said in their responses.

The OECD also said: "In deciding whether to involve parents more closely, it is important for policy-makers to clarify why they want to put a policy in place." The Education Bill shows signs that the Government has not asked itself this. If it has, it has come up with some very cynical reasons.

Many of us interested in the role of parents in education draw a distinction between the need to involve every parent in helping their child to learn, and involving

many countries, how can parents set out their agenda for inclusion in the "agreement"?

The claim that the provision of more parent governors on governing bodies and on LEAs will give parents a greater say also needs closer examination. Unless parent governors have a structure which enables them to consult parents within the schools and similarly within the LEA, these proposals look like tokenism. Parent governors find it difficult to reach their constituency, many parents do not know their parent governors. Parents tend to identify most with their child's class or tutor group.

However, when it comes to ending selective entry to grammar schools and deciding which of several types the school should be, the Bill requires parents to make the ultimate decision by ballot. It seems strange that parents cannot be trusted to do the best for their child without a contract, but can be trusted to decide about school structures which might affect many generations to come.

The parliamentary process should allow for changes to the Bill to be discussed and agreed. So what can be hoped for? Governing bodies could be required to have a home-school policy without insisting on signed contracts. Similarly, if parent governors were entitled to consult parent councils drawn from termly class meetings, as in Norway, a genuine voice for parents could be established. Both locally and nationally, a structure built on the right of parents to elect parent governors would give parents similar rights to be heard at national level as in many other countries.

Perhaps it all depends on whether the Government really wants to hear from parents, or only wants them to make decisions which it would rather avoid. The author is executive secretary of the Campaign for State Education.

'It seems strange that parents cannot be trusted to do the best for their child without a contract'

parents in policy-making and governance. The OECD researched both aspects and found successful examples of each.

If the Bill becomes law, every governing body will be required to ask parents to sign a home-school "agreement" to "cement" the partnership. Thus will a principle be established in schools that responsible participation is only expected if all the participants have signed to say they will be responsible. This is a very dangerous example to put before young people. Governing bodies will be required to "consult" parents about the agreement. Without the class meetings and parent councils in schools which the OECD report found in

TO ADVERTISE CALL
0171 680 6800

EDUCATION

FAX:
0171 782 7899

POSTS

ABBOTSHOLME SCHOOL
DERBYSHIRE
(Independent Co-ed Boarding & Day, HMC, approx 220 pupils)

BURSAR

Applications are invited for the post of Bursar which will become vacant in mid-1998.

The Bursar is responsible for the business and financial administration of the School including its properties and estate. The appointment is made by the School Governors to whom the Bursar is directly responsible whilst co-operating fully with the Headmaster.

Applicants should write for further particulars and an application form to:
Mr A J Gill
Secretary to Abbotsholme School
Forrester & Forrester
59 High Street
MALMESBURY, Wilt
SN16 9AH.

INDEPENDENT EDUCATION

DEVONSHIRE HOUSE SCHOOL
SCHOLARSHIP EXAMINATION

The School is for boys and girls from two and a half to thirteen years of age. A scholarship is offered for entry to the school in September 1998.

Candidates must have been born between 1st September 1983 and 31st August 1990. The Scholarship Examination will be held on Thursday 12th March 1998. For further information and an application form, please contact the Admissions Secretary, Devonshire House School, 69 Fitzalan Avenue, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG3 6PB. Tel: 0171-435 1916.

COURSES

WANTED KEEN READERS
(Spot our errors!)

Would you like to earn £9 to £12 an hour part or full-time working from home reading books for publishers and other organisations. Many freelance proofreaders and editors have been trained by Chapperton over the past seven years. (Read some of their comments in our Prospectus).

People with no previous experience, but a keen interest in books, have established their own business with our help in technique and marketing. No experience can be successful, but with application this could be the career you have been looking for. You need enthusiasm and a sharp eye. Your age and background is irrelevant. Send this advertisement marking all the mistakes you can find for telephone mail. We will send a FREE PROSPECTUS of our correspondence and distance training course without obligation.

Chapperton,
2 Southernhay West, Exeter, EX1 1JG.
Telephone: 01392 49488, Fax: 01392 49888

ALL BOX NUMBER REPLIES SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO:
BOX No.
c/o THE TIMES NEWSPAPERS
P.O. BOX 3553, VIRGINIA ST,
LONDON, E1 9GA

Learn French fast

Intensive French Classes - Starting now

For a free brochure call
0171 723 7471

Alliance Française
Sponsored by the French Government
Registered charity no 276022

Alliance Française de Londres 1 Dorset Square, London NW1 6PU
and 4 Morwell St, London WC1B 3AN E-mail: info@alliancefrancaise.london.org.uk

COURSES

QUEEN'S

QUALITY OFFICE

SKILLS TRAINING

• KEYBOARDING, W.W., S/HAND

• EXCEL, ACCESS, POWERPOINT

• PACKAGING

• COMMUNICATION SKILLS

• CAREER PREPARATION

• OFFICE BEST QUALIFICATIONS

• IN SMALL TOWNED SCHOOLS

• NEXT START DATE JAN. 1998.

Tel: 0171 599 8583 London

Tel: 01223 367016 Cambridge

EASTER REVISION

EASTER COURSES

BERKSTED COLLEGE

OXFORD

A-LEVEL & GCSE

For a Prospectus call:

01865-242678

Cherwell Tutors

Greyfriars

Oxford OX1 1LD

SCHOLARSHIPS

HARROW SCHOOL

The Peter Beckwith Harrow Trust

Offers two scholarships every year to pupils currently being educated in state schools. The candidates are expected to show exceptional academic potential and to excel in at least one further field of sporting, musical, dramatic or creative activity.

Any boy who is over 10 and under 12 on 1st September 1998 and who is attending a state school in the UK is eligible to sit for the 1998 scholarship. Boys should normally have attended a state school for at least the previous three years.

The successful candidates will be offered a place at an acceptable preparatory school for two years followed by admission to Harrow School.

Financial assistance is provided, up to the full value of fees if necessary, for seven years of schooling.

For further details please contact:-
Mrs Angie Peppin

The Peter Beckwith Harrow Trust
Hill Place House, 55a High Street,
London SW19 5BA.

Tel. 0181 944 1288 Fax: 0181 944 1054

The closing date for the receipt of applications is
Tuesday, 27th January 1998

Registered Charity Number 1015344

COURSES

LEITH'S

School of Food & Wine Ltd

For aspiring Professionals/Chefs and confident cooks.

2 Term
DIPLOMA
Starts
Jan 12th
1998

0171 229 0177
21 ST ALBANS GROVE, W19 5BP

POSTGRADUATE COURSES

THE IMPERIAL COLLEGE MSc IN FINANCE

Your Passport to Success.

As the world of finance becomes increasingly technical, the most successful route to success is to join a specialist master's degree at a world-class centre of excellence.

An MSc in Finance from Imperial College is one of the most prestigious degrees of the kind. It identifies you as an individual of exceptional achievement, capable of pursuing a rewarding career in the city, in commerce or in academic research.

For further information and details of our next Open Evening on 18th February, please contact Paul Genger, Admissions Administrator.

The Imperial MSc - valid for a lifetime

Imperial College
MANAGEMENT SCHOOL

53 Prince's Gate, Exhibition Road, London, SW7 2PG
Tel: +44 (0)171 594 8205 Fax: +44 (0)171 823 7885
e-mail: m.school@ic.ac.uk

EDUCATION

THE SUNDAY TIMES

THE SUNDAY TIMES

EDUCATION

FORTHCOMING FEATURES

1998

EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT

Friday 9th January

Sunday 11th January

EASTER REVISION

Friday 16th January

Sunday 18th January

BOARDING SCHOOLS

Friday 23rd January

Sunday 25th January

MBA SUPPLEMENT

Monday 26th January

POSTGRADUATE COURSES

Friday 20th February

Sunday 22nd February

For further information about these features or to advertise please contact the Education Team on:

Tel: 0171 680 6800

Fax: 0171 782 7899

Email: sharon.maffusson@newsinf.co.uk

EASTER REVISION

MPW

Mander Portman Woodward

A LEVEL & GCSE

EASTER COURSES

◆ Intensive syllabus

◆ Focus on exam technique

◆ Board specific A level courses

◆ Accommodation is available

Birmingham Bristol and Cambridge

LONDON (0171) 494 8205
LONDON (0171) 494 8205
BIRMINGHAM (0121) 494 8205
BRISTOL (0117) 494 8205
CAMBRIDGE (01223) 494 8205

CHRISTMAS REVISION

A Level & GCSE

Christmas

Revision

◆ Intensive syllabus

◆ Focus on exam technique

◆ Board specific A level courses

◆ Accommodation is available

Birmingham Bristol and Cambridge

LONDON (0171) 494 8205
LONDON (0171) 494 8205
BIRMINGHAM (0121) 494 8205
BRISTOL (0117) 494 8205
CAMBRIDGE (01223) 494 8205

دکتر من الشمل

'Eighty people came in one by one to be told they had to go. Imagine the agony for a young editor'

After a controversial start and reports of low staff morale, Richard Addis, Editor of *The Express*, is still hopeful of a change in his paper's fortunes. Interview by Michael Leapman

Richard Addis has filled the Editor's chair at *The Express* for just over two years, but still finds it uncomfortable. "I've never liked this MFI leather-covered furniture," he confides to me. And when Stephen Grabiner, the laddish chief executive of United Newspapers, arrives to join us, Addis teases him with a plea for an office makeover.

Grabiner hedges: "After a year of year-on-year sales increases you can have your new furniture."

"So that will be in six months," is Addis's triumphant retort. He swivels on the despised chair to face me. "Make a note," he commands.

Addis is right to underline that sales of the mid-market tabloid, now called simply *The Express* after the effective merger of the daily and Sunday editions, have been on a gently rising curve since the middle of the year, compared with the same period in 1996. The advance is insignificant, however, compared with the sharper gains made by its chief rival, the *Daily Mail*. And despite Addis's editorial innovations, the gap between the two papers continues to widen.

But he believes that changes in the nation's social and political climate may at last be working in favour of the new paper he is creating from a title that, before he arrived in December 1995, had been in retreat for decades.

Turn the clock back 30 years. In 1967 the *Daily Express*, just beginning its long post-Beaverbrook decline, sold just under four million copies a day — nearly half a million down from its crusading peak in the late Fifties. The *Daily Mail* was at just more than two million. Both were struggling against the all-powerful *Daily Mirror*, selling more than five million copies.

Ten years later, all three had been damaged by Rupert Murdoch's revitalised *Sun*, then about to overtake the *Daily Mirror* at 3.7 million. *The Express* was down to 2.5 million and the *Daily Mail* 1.8 million. By 1987 the *Daily Mail*, still at 1.8 million, was on the brink of overhauling the demoralised *Daily Express*. Today the *Daily Mail* has 2.3 million, is 7 per cent up on last year while *The Express*, on 1.21 million, has improved its circulation by less than 1 per cent — still slightly below what it was when Addis took over.

Despite that, company audits show the paper has remained profitable and Addis, the former executive editor of the *Daily Mail*, believes he is achieving a significant turnaround at last.

"We set about this with great gusto, like you would in a badly ruined garage — hacking and slashing and cutting things down," he recalls of his first few weeks as Editor. "Within weeks we were producing an *Express* that was quite different."

The changes began in January 1996. Nearly every day the paper carried an announcement of some startling development. Harking back to *The Express's*

famous history, Addis restored Beachcomber, the whimsical columnist created by J.B. Morton in the Thirties, and reintroduced the pseudonymous William Hickey gossip column, dropped in the Eighties.

New, upmarket columnists — Mary Kenney, Anthony Holden, Alexander Chancellor — were engaged. Roy Hattersley was hired as a television critic. With some fanfare, the letters page was brought from the back of the paper to somewhere near the front and letters were solicited from celebrities such as Terry Wogan, John Humphrys, Jimmy Hill and the Duchess of Kent. A page of answers to mundane queries was launched, aping the *Daily Mail*.

Some of these innovations have survived, but the letters page soon returned to the back of the paper, taking Beachcomber with it. Chancellor and Hattersley have moved on. "It was all quite a healthy



process," Addis insists. "I would defend it as a way of indicating change — making dramatic moves when you arrive, then settling down. I thought *The Express* desperately needed a heart."

But the response of readers was negative. Circulation continued to sink. Then in August 1996 came the merger of United Newspapers, owners of *The Express* titles, and Lord Hollick's television-led conglomerate MAI. Grabiner was hired from *The Daily Telegraph* to run the newspaper side of the merged company, United News and Media.

The new management team found Addis depressed by his lack of initial success. "When I first met Stephen and Lord Hollick, I told them I wasn't sure whether I could do anything with the paper," he recalls. "I was philosophically accepting that maybe we were at the end of the road."

Lord Hollick and Grabiner disagreed. They began by imposing tight cost controls, which led to the merger of the daily and Sunday papers, with a reduced staff under a single editor. This meant that either Addis or Sue Douglas, the Editor of *The Sunday Express*, would have to fall on their sword, and they both knew it. It was a tense time.

"I wasn't sure that it wouldn't be me who would have to go," he recalls. "But Sue and I actually managed, rather miraculously, not to fall out over it."

In the event Douglas, who had been appointed at the same time as Addis, was the reluctant loser. Most of her senior staff went with her, along with many other long-term employees thought to be sur-

plus to the requirements of the streamlined seven-day paper.

Senior staff say that Addis got the job over Douglas because he did everything the management demanded and never once defended the editorial department from the cost-cutters.

Although he had fired a few people in the initial pruning, this was the first time that Addis, then 40, had been involved in such a wholesale slaughter. He says it sickened him. He is a mild-mannered man who, as a youth, had thought of becoming a monk. It all went against the grain.

"Eighty people came in one by one and were told they had to go. It was a horrible atmosphere. People queued outside, knowing what they were going to be told. Imagine the agony of that for a young editor," he says.

But imagine, too, the even greater agony of the victims, some of whom had spent the best part of a lifetime with the paper. There are still complaints about the brutality of the cull, in particular about Addis's failure to break the news in person to all the people who had to go. Because there were so many, he saw only about half, leaving senior executives to deal with the others.

Former staff say it is a nonsense to suggest that he knew "the agony" of the sackings because he typically left it to others to do the dirty work. Apocryphal stories circulated that those fortunate enough to be summoned to his office often kept their jobs if they were shrewd enough to weep or to claim affection and veneration for St Paul, Addis's favourite saint.

His approach was reportedly crass, telephoning the long-serving New York correspondent and inquiring: "How would you like a rather large cheque?"

"It was horrible but I could see it was necessary," says the man who is also reported to have likened sacking staff to clearing out an old sock drawer. Critics also claim that when his deputy, Ian Monk, faced dismissal for suspected corrupt practice, Addis defended him until told by Lord Hollick that both would then have to go. Monk left that night.

"I'm glad to say the atmosphere now is much happier, with the office decked out with Christmas cards and all the departments having their parties," says Addis. Survivors, however, find ironic his instructions that "staff must misbehave or be sacked" at his Christmas party (officially called the "St Lazarus Day Party") this week, since this was the first *Express* Editor to frown on the practice of lunch. Staff were instructed that if lunch was required to get a story, then "forget the story".

Even if not all staff feel like joining in, Addis's new party mood reflects an easing of the financial stringency. "We have got the costs right down, reinvested £10 million — mainly in the new Saturday magazine — and we have another £10 million next year for huge projects that



Richard Addis is rumoured to have kept staff who were shrewd enough to claim they venerated St Paul, his favourite saint

will improve the paper a lot. Clive Hollick is very enthusiastic about newspapers. When he arrived we weren't sure that he would be." Lord Hollick is also known to be enthusiastic about new Labour and Addis wondered at first whether this would cause friction, given *The Express's* traditional conservatism.

"If you were him, wouldn't you have told me that I had to endorse Blair in the election? I was expecting him to say that — he was so much part of the Blair project and passionately wanted the victory."

In the event Lord Hollick gave no such instruction (although there were some notably pro-Blair news stories) and *The Express* half-heartedly advised its readers to vote Conservative. Since the election the paper has grown increasingly supportive of the Government: last week its main feature concluded that Mr Blair was a greater radical reformer than Baroness Thatcher.

Ten years ago our readers would have quivered with rage at that, Addis concedes. "But we did some research. We found that in May half our readers voted

Tory and half Labour. A month later we did a survey and 90 per cent of those who voted Tory said they were quite happy with the Labour Government."

"We think we have found a new middle class which has emerged as an important force in the past ten years and which does vote Labour. It has different obsessions from the Thatcherite middle class that David English built the *Mail* on so brilliantly."

Thus the new *Express* focuses sharply on the family and health. Its first drugs correspondent, who will write on the use and abuse of recreational drugs such as cannabis and Ecstasy, has just been appointed. Another current national obsession is sport, and Addis believes he has caught that mood, too, by running a separate sports section in the middle of the paper every day. Surveys show that this is popular with readers.

Grabiner, who helped to develop the sports section, holds it out as an example of co-operation between the editorial and

the commercial sides of the paper. "We realised sport was an area it was impossible to write too much about, so we've invested heavily in it across all seven days. We are now giving Richard and his colleagues the money they need to develop the whole paper. We're putting money into increased pagination, marketing and better-quality magazines."

"We are taking a newspaper that has had at least ten years of being in the hands of people who didn't love it, didn't care for it and didn't invest in it. We are starting to love and care for it. But it takes a very long time to reverse a decline, especially one that has been going on for so long."

Neither man expects an imminent dramatic improvement, but they are encouraged by evidence that some readers of the "red top" tabloids — *The Sun* and *The Express's* sister paper, the *Daily Star* — are switching to the middle market.

There have been many predictions of his imminent departure, but so far Addis, famous for maintaining public insouciance in the face of adversity, has stayed firmly put.

The discreet commercial charm of ITV

■ WILL the sound, of a mobile phone ringing away inside its Christmas box make you smile or scream? Will an absent father faxing over the wrapping paper to his distant son melt your heart? As commercialism bites ever deeper into ITV's festive programming, viewers' reactions to these images will be watched closely. For the first time all of ITV's seasonal specials, starting with Jack Dee's on Sunday, are being sponsored, by Panasonic. But will this increased, repetitive clutter lead people to zap to another channel? The growth in credits, which began so innocently with Powergen's umbrellas on weather reports, is starting to annoy. The recent Doritos credits attached to ITV Movies — in which dead famous faces make crunching noises — produced a hundred complaints to the Independent Television Commission, which says "it certainly hit a nerve".

The problem is that under sponsorship rules, companies cannot show their products directly. So Panasonic's £500,000 for its 15-second slots has to focus on suggestive noises: the phone's ring and the fax machine's singing electronic notes. These, of course, are the very things people want to escape from at Christmas, aren't they?

■ THOSE switching over to the BBC may find themselves

singing along to something far more acceptable, a seasonal version of *Perfect Day*, the BBC's brilliantly successful promo. The recent chill prompted me to call up Jane Frost, the corporate brand manager — brought into the BBC after working on Persil and Shell campaigns — who devised it. What a touch of commercialism can achieve! The Christmas version has been doctored with a specially transformed wintry park backdrop, snowy topiary and a lot of (Jack) Frost's handiwork. She even managed to persuade a reluctant Director-General, John Birt, to have a special Christmas card



A Merry Christmas from Auntie and John Birt

made with the wintry scene and the strapline "Wishing You a Perfect Day".

By the way, *Perfect Day* has raised £1 million for Children in Need, and is about to be released internationally. Frost (Jane) has received no special bonus, but says she chose to work for the BBC because she wanted her small children to grow up in a cultured world with the same privileges she had enjoyed.

But how can she top *Perfect Day*? Well, in January the next phase of BBC branding building gets into gear and she has persuaded the Daili Lama to do a plug — he turns the World Service tune, *Lilli Buriro*.



■ CLASSIC FM's Christmas card features little birds, as notes of music, sitting on the staves. I rushed to the piano to play the tune, but couldn't figure it out at all. A bit odd. But Classic is getting something right. Paul Gambaccini, the presenter so badly treated by Radio 3 and Radio 4, is returning to Classic FM, to present its popular chart show, as Richard Baker departs for Radio 3.

■ ONE of the most enjoyable columns in *The Guardian* is the one by Ian Mayes, the paper's newish Reader's Editor. In a move unmatched anywhere else in "Fleet Street", he is given space to muse publicly each Saturday about the grouches of the paper's hugely loyal readership, and its own lapses.

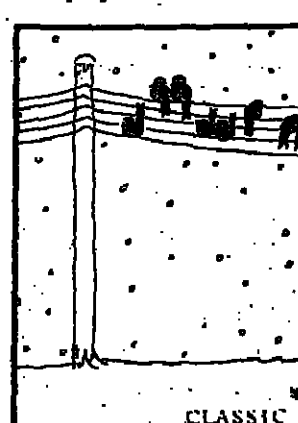
Last week, he told the following story. A bleary-eyed couple were reading *The Guardian* on an early morning Underground trip to a far-flung appointment. "My

were becoming ominously pompous because they had swallowed Labour's line and truly believe that Cabinet Ministers and the Prime Minister would prefer to appear on its breakfast show than the *Today* programme because more people watch it. Didn't this GMTV executive think this might be true? "Don't be daft," came the tart response.

This is in marked contrast to the air of self-confidence that buoys up *Today* even in the midst of its spat with Labour spin doctors. When *The Sunday Times* reported that Tony Blair didn't listen to *Today* I tackled the presenters, including John Humphrys and the BBC's God, we've got the wrong day," they said, after reading the dateline on *The Guardian's* G2 tabloid section, which proclaimed it to be Wednesday, not Thursday. After a bit of an altercation they decided to turn back. "Near home," wrote Mr Mayes, "they realised the fault was ours, not theirs — too late to start out again." He added: "I completely identified with them." The column has shown that *Guardian* readers are literate and like things to be exact — and they are not slow to complain, be it about incorrect dates or large articles on pornographic films. Mr Mayes says readers are delighted to receive letters from him. Customer care is yet one more example of the way newspapers are cannily marketing themselves.

■ AMAZING what you pick up at Christmas parties. A senior person at GMTV told me this week that the show's presenters — and producers

news executives. They all said the same thing: "Don't believe it."



Classic FM's Christmas card: can you spot the tune?

■ PHEW, what a relief to find this week's *Time Out* has stuck to Christmas topics. Last week's issue — bearing the cover line "Does size matter?" — was stuffed with so many full-frontals that it belonged on the top shelf. Two weeks earlier there had been an explicit sex directory. The content surely sits oddly with the magazine's sections on children's outings and family entertainment.

Tony Elliott, the publisher — and a father of two children, aged nine and seven — says: "It was unfortunate they

were so close together." He debated with his wife about whether to leave the sex and body issue hanging around at home (they did, I didn't). "The average age of our readers is the late twenties, and I doubt whether more than 10 to 15 per cent have families. Bluntly, it's not a magazine for the middle aged," he says.

■ FURTHER signs of the timely death of laddism? The *London Evening Standard's* Friday ES Magazine, geared towards young males, is relaunching in January as a unisex product, with more fashion, lifestyle articles and a glossy front cover. Editor Adam Edwards said sadly that the men's columns (Gizmos, Tube Talk and Pike Elishing) are being shunted together on one forlorn page — a men's corner, rather like women's pages in the 1970s. Out completely are guides to the best strip clubs, geared towards the stars and health. I predict it will look just like *The Sunday Times Style* magazine.

■ WATCHING the British Comedy Awards last Saturday, it struck me that as Jonathan Ross fishes out, he is beginning to look (and sound) like Harry H. Corbett of *Stepie & Son*. The fact that the sparkly dinner suit he has worn for the past three years is now too tight only heightened the resemblance.

TV violence comes in all shapes and forms

THERE is just time to squeeze in a last serious television issue before Santa Claus movies and extended Christmas specials such as *Men Behaving Badly* start to dominate the small screen.

It is necessary to do so at a time when goodwill and good spirits are higher on most people's agenda than serious issues, because an interesting piece of research on understanding violence on television, published this week, might have escaped your attention.

The work, commissioned by the UK's main broadcasting groups, plus the Broadcasting Standards Commission, no pussyfoot when it comes to seeking out gratuitous violence and stopping it, reveals that most viewers do not spontaneously express concern about violence on television.

It is hardly a conclusion designed to attract headlines. How much more satisfying, not to mention newsworthy, to be able to blame violence on television for the disintegration of society and record public outrage on the subject.

The "qualitative" research, as they call it in the trade, was based on detailed discussions with 20 groups designed to be a national cross-section in terms of sex, age, class and region.

It found that while precise definitions of violence tend to be personal, most people are capable of distinguishing between violent acts that are more graphic, realistic and shocking and those that are "less real, less graphic and generally less disturbing". And guess what, most people do not see the slapstick violence of a James Bond movie, an old-fashioned western or even a cartoon as violent.

These findings by Andrew Irving Associates, a company with experience of investigating social policy issues, but who are newcomers to the media violence debate, which has been running for longer than *Coronation Street*, amount to common sense.

What is more, the groups were able to map out their own selected examples of types of violence linked to particular programmes and what it meant to them.

There is the "fantasy/harmless" category exemplified by James Bond and the "historical/educational" violence of *Sharpe*. The often blood-soaked episodes of *Casualty* is rated "everyday family drama", and then there is the "real life" of boxing and the news and "adult (unacceptable) drama" in

the shape of the rape scene in the drama *London Bridge*. What is interesting is that for men all five categories amounted to acceptable viewing. Women drew the line at "adult (unacceptable) drama".

The study, which involved 124 people, of whom only 18 spontaneously mentioned concern about violence on television, found a range of attitudes. At one extreme there was a minority, mainly female and elderly, who disliked programmes with graphic violence. At the other end of the spectrum there was a male minority very tolerant of extreme violence.

Most viewers were in the middle and had an upper limit of some kind. They found very graphic, vivid portrayals of fictional or real-life violence off-putting.

The findings by Andrew Irving seem obvious, yet they do represent a fresh approach to the problems of violence on television. Until now, the tendency has been to count individual acts of violence on television, sometimes even "violent" acts in *Tom and Jerry* cartoons, and added them up as if they were all the same. Absurd comparisons are then made between years, or channels, suggesting that violence has gone up or down on a percentage basis.

Here, at least, researchers are trying to get to grips with the differences between portrayals of violence and the varying meanings ascribed to them by different people. It should be compulsory reading for those great experts on violence on television — backbenchers of all parties.

Inevitably, the survey is only the beginning. The Institute of Communications Studies at the University of Leeds will be taking the issue further using video-editing techniques. The Leeds research will try to uncover people's thinking by allowing them to produce their own versions of violent scenes.

Of course, not even Santa Claus could provide a definitive answer to the biggest question of all — the extent to which, if at all, fictional violence on television contributes to real violence. There are just too many variables. But until the media research equivalent of Fermat's last theorem is finally cracked, a cautious approach to explicit, gratuitous or sadistic violence on television might be wise.

● Fresh research into understanding violence on television is available from the ITC Information Office, 33 Foley Street, London, W1P 1LB.



Raymond Shroddy



BBC1 will offer 45 minutes of *Men Behaving Badly* on Christmas Day, but there are those who feel the charm of the year's smash hit is waning

Short on Christmas crackers

The good news this Christmas is that there is a brilliant line-up of festive television programmes. Brilliant, that is, if you happen to be under 10.

For adults who have little other than television to boost their spirits as they confront a mélange of over-excited children and flagging relatives, the menu looks sparse. Unless you happen to have a fetish for the Spice Girls, the workings of Willy Wonka's chocolate factory or have time to become a cartoon addict, you might find the radio a more inspiring option on the day. The combined Christmas Day schedules of the BBC, ITV and Channel 4 must surely rank as some of the most unremarkable for years.

The BBC has spent £42 million on its package for the season and, to give credit where it is due, has at least tried to entertain us during Christmas evening, when three hit comedies are screened back to back on BBC1. From 9pm we are served with a 70-minute *One Foot in the Grave* special, starring Richard Wilson, followed by 45 minutes of *Men Behaving Badly* and half an hour of Nick Hancock's sports quiz *They Think It's All Over*.

Rather unfairly for the BBC, though,

The festive TV line-up is surely the most disappointing for years, says Carol Midgley

it all somehow feels a little flat, and that is almost certainly because we are spoiled by the memory of last year's comedy classic, the critically acclaimed *Only Fools and Horses*. The Christmas Day episode pulled in more than 18 million viewers and was followed by another episode on December 29 that was watched by a record audience of more than 24 million.

One Foot in the Grave, while still original, quality comedy, is surely now rather long in the tooth, and there are those who say that even the charm of this year's smash hit *Men Behaving Badly* is waning. Lovers of comedy might be better advised to tune into BBC2 at 2.15pm this year to watch half an hour of *Shooting Stars*.

Last year ITV was severely trounced by the BBC during Christmas week. It managed to get only one programme in the ratings top ten — *Coronation Street*. This year, however, there is scarcely any sense of a ratings battle between the two terrestrial giants. ITV is pitting the *Muppet's Christmas*

Carol against BBC's Noel Edmonds' *Christmas Presents* after the Queen's message. Its afternoon film, *Home Alone II*, is scheduled against BBC's *The Mask*, a fairly uninspiring match. Perhaps the slot that will be the most fiercely contested among families is at 4pm, when BBC1 screens *The Flintstones* against ITV's *The Spice Girls Live in Concert*.

Channel 4, as is customary, offers a totally different schedule, opting for gravitas and culture. At 12.40 it screens a documentary tribute to Diana, Princess of Wales, followed by a film about the nurses who fought to save soldiers' lives during the First World War.

After the *Alternative Christmas Message*, this year delivered by Margaret Gibney, the Belfast schoolgirl who wrote to 150 world leaders asking for peace in the province, there is a performance of Verdi's *Requiem* with Luciano Pavarotti. In the evening, we are offered the English National Opera's production of *The Damnation of*

Faust. Over the season generally, of course, there are some potential gems, such as the BBC's *The Woman in White*, BBC2's comedy drama *Motherhood* and ITV's *The Canterbury Ghost*, screened on Boxing Day.

For children, BBC1 offers a stunning line-up, starting with a Christmas *Teletubbies* (scheduled more than two hours later than usual to allow children to open their presents), *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory*, *Peter and the Wolf* and, later, *Top of the Pops* and *Animal Hospital*.

ITV seems rather less inviting, but on Christmas morning it does offer the Hollywood movie *Honey I Shrunk the Kids*, and the first screening of the cartoon *Father Christmas and the Missing Reindeer*, featuring the voice of David Jason as Santa.

And for those who will inevitably complain that Christmas is losing its magic, let us not forget that an important television tradition will be broken this year. For the first time ITN, not the BBC, will bring us the Queen's Christmas message. There is speculation that it will be broadcast live for the first time and will definitely go out on the Internet. Christmas simply isn't what it used to be.

TO ADVERTISE CALL
0171 481 4481

MEDIA, SALES & MARKETING

FAX:
0171 782 7826

How to Make £25,000 A Year - With Your Home Computer
This free information kit from the Morris College of Journalism shows you exactly how! Call Free: 0800 371500

CARTOONING FOR PROFIT
Make money from your cartooning and illustration skills. Study from home for a new career or profitable second income. For a free prospectus, Call Free: 0800 371 500

How to Make £30,000 p.a. Freelance Writing
This free Newsletter from the Morris College of Journalism shows you exactly how. Obtain your free copy now! FreePhone: 0800 371 500

How to Make Money With Your Camera
This free from the Morris College of Journalism Newsletter gives you 52 best selling photo ideas. One for every week of the year. FreePhone: 0800 371 500

Customer Services/Export Manager
A large International Freight Forwarding company based in the East End of London require an experienced IT Literate Customer Services Manager to implement a new 24 hour Customer Services Department. The Candidate must be a self starter with good knowledge of the publishing world, Freight Forwarding and good IT knowledge to liaise with programmers in the development of systems. Salary cc £25,000, applications close 16th January 1998.
Please Reply to Box No 9127

How to Make £20,000 p.a. as a Travel Writer
This free Newsletter shows you exactly how to pay for all your travel and make money! Call Free: 0800 371 500 + 44 1822 822 828

MUSIC Industry Training
We are running a unique training course in conjunction with the music industry, if you are interested in the business Please Call Global Out: 0171 583 0236

STEWART GRAND PRIX

PAUL STEWART RACING

Opportunities exist in key media positions at both Stewart Grand Prix, who made their successful entry into the FIA Formula 1 World Championship in 1997, and Paul Stewart Racing, who again took both the British Formula 3 and Formula Vauxhall titles this year.

Media Relations Manager - Stewart Grand Prix

The successful candidate will travel to all round of the FIA Formula 1 World Championship to write and distribute media releases, liaise with the international media, arrange interviews for drivers and other team personnel, and organise media functions on behalf of the team. Identifying media opportunities both for the team and its sponsor-partners and developing media strategies are key aspects of this position, for which applicants should demonstrate substantial experience in media related work. One or more foreign languages are desirable, as is the ability to write with clarity under pressure. Knowledge of the Formula 1 environment is crucial.

Press Officer - Paul Stewart Racing

This new position would suit applicants willing to attend all F3 races and some Formula One rounds. Candidates should be able to update and rewrite the existing media documentation, organise media coverage of PSR's 1998 launch, and handle day to day media enquiries. Fostering close relations with the national, local and trade press is an important aspect of the job, which will also involve managing press cuttings and photographic holdings.

Remuneration package commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Please reply in writing with a full CV to:

Stewart Grand Prix Ltd/Paul Stewart Racing (UK) Ltd
16 Tanners Drive, Binklands, Milton Keynes,
Buckinghamshire, MK14 5BW.
Quote reference: SPR(SGP) or PPR(PSR)

ESTÉE LAUDER
Regional Sales & Marketing Manager
Based Dubai

Estée Lauder International has a high profile opportunity in its regional office in Dubai covering Middle East and Africa for an exceptional communicator to be responsible for sales, advertising and promotional expenses, and image of Estée Lauder for the entire area.

Particular responsibilities will include development of regional strategies and programmes as well as lending guidance and assistance to Distributors in their implementation of these plans. This will require extensive travel throughout the region.

This exciting and challenging career opportunity is ideally suited to a graduate with a minimum of five years' experience and a proven record of achievement in sales and marketing management within a competitive consumer goods/retail/fashion or related environment. You must be willing to re-locate to the U.A.E and be fluent in written/oral English. Fluency in Arabic is an advantage but not essential.

Please submit your CV to Sue Rout, Estée Lauder Companies, 71-73 Grosvenor Street, London W1X 0BH, or telephone for an application form on 0171 409 6897 (24 hour answerphone).

NETWORK SERVICES

Expanding Docklands based NETWORKING, STRUCTURED CABLING & PABX Re-seller Company.

SALES MANAGER
OTE £60K + profit share + benefits

This is an exciting opportunity for an exceptional candidate with proven Management success within the Telecoms System and Networking area. The role will involve taking full responsibility for Sales and Marketing heading a Team of Solutions Sales Executives. Full Directional status will be given to the right candidate within a year.

SALES EXECUTIVE
OTE £35K + benefits

We are seeking an ambitious, intelligent and enthusiastic individual who is capable of the "Solution Sale". Must have at least two years proven success within a related industry.

TELE-SALES
Enthusiastic, Energetic, Self-Motivated Tele-Sales Personnel required. Package details available to short-listed Candidates.
Please send CV to:

NETWORK SERVICES Ltd
22 Skylines
Limchabour
Docklands
London
E14 9TS

Research Assistant and Consulting Assistant

Frank N. Magid Associates Ltd., a worldwide leading research and consultation firm, is seeking a research assistant in our London office. This individual will assist research analysts in the design, analysis, and preparation of presentation materials for market research projects. Position requires an individual with excellent oral and written communication skills; the ability to function as a part of a team; good organisational skills; computer skills; knowledge of and some experience in the design, application, and analysis of survey research. Prefer an individual with at least a university degree in communications, journalism, market research, or social science.

Previous media experience is desirable. Multi language proficiencies is also a plus.

Frank N. Magid Associates Ltd. is also looking for a consulting assistant to assist senior consultants by providing writing support for various projects. Responsibilities will include, but not be limited to, assisting with critiques of client materials; writing and developing internal and external communications materials; and maintaining a working knowledge of current television news presentation, advertising, and promotion trends. This position requires an individual who has excellent analytical, writing, interpersonal communication, and organisational skills. Prefer an individual with knowledge of or experience in television newsroom environment; a degree in communications, journalism, or related area; and experience in television journalism or related area.

If interested and qualified, please send cover letter, thesis or other major writing sample, and curriculum vitae to:

Amy Jo Reimer
Corporate Recruiter
Frank N. Magid Associates Ltd
18 Maddox Street
Mayfair
London W1R 9PL

Marketing Manager
Specialised New Products

International marketing company based in the UK, which also develops and produces new consumer non-food products in co-operation with third parties with special reference to barcoding and specialised printing techniques. The successful applicant will be an experienced marketing executive responsible for the "New Product" sector of our business. In depth knowledge of barcoding technology and specialised printing is a must. Also essential is a comprehensive understanding of the US consumer market to develop or export. Proven experience in the aforementioned areas, a University degree in a related discipline, and 6-8 years' managerial experience are mandatory.

Please send a full CV to Box No 9090

SENIOR REPORTER

Leading UK Chinese newspaper is looking for a senior reporter to work in London. Candidates must have minimum 5 years experience working with a Hong Kong Chinese media; conversant with social and political affairs in Hong Kong and UK; and fluent in spoken and written Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin) and English.

Detailed CV with salary expected should be sent to: Personnel Department, Sing Tao, 46 Dean Street, London W1V 5AP.

the times

Will you vote for me? You must be joking!

Barbara Follet, the Labour MP for Stevenage, always made sure during the election campaign that voters were issued with Blu-Tack along with their posters and that there was wine to keep up spirits in her "War Room".

The archetypal new Labour candidate also knew how to thank supporters, such as Lord Antenor, the film producer, who just happened to turn up on the doorstep of her Hertfordshire home.

"If you are watching this, Dickie," says Follet, peering into the camera. "I just want to say I think you are wonderful because you make us all feel special."

The old Labour campaign of Ken Livingstone had neither Blu-Tack, wine nor film-industry peers, and usually consisted of the solitary, thankless task of addressing the intercom systems outside windy blocks of flats in Brent East, North London.

"Will you vote for me on May 1?" Livingstone asks. "You must be joking!" the disembodied voice replies.

The Eurosceptic Conservative candidate for Northampton North, Tony Marlow, spreads the message hopefully with "Keep the pound and Tony Marlow". The voters kept only the pound.

The insights into the real life of the election campaign of 1997 come from one of the most unusual political documentaries to be made in Britain — two programmes of *Campaign Confessions*, to be shown on BBC2 next week. Ten candidates were

The real lives of ten election candidates, filmed by amateurs, makes for an unusual documentary. Raymond Snoddy reports

chosen from a variety of parties and constituencies as geographically diverse as the Western Isles and St Ives in Cornwall. But the trick was to ask the chosen candidates to nominate a friend or a relative to shoot the campaign with a Hi-8 video camera.

Charles Miller, the executive producer of *Campaign Confessions*, says: "We were looking for an alternative way of archiving what goes on in British politics by using Hi-8 cameras to get a greater sort of access, to get closer to the people."

The amateur camera operators included 13-year-old Cai Howells, son of Kim Howells, now the Education and Training Minister; Andre Eagle, the father of Maria, one half of Labour's Eagle twin MPs; and Simon Fletcher, Livingstone's researcher. Follet chose John Seaman, a 19-year-old student, after she saw his work in an exhibition at an art college.

All the camera operators were brought to London for some training with cameras and instructions on how to pan shots, close-ups and how to persuade their subjects to talk to camera twice a day.

They had to film between 10 and 20 one-hour tapes during the campaign. Miller ended up ploughing through 235 tapes for material that was in focus with good sound.

Miller, a former BBC producer who is now freelance, says: "I think



Livingstone: is anybody there?



Follet: has everybody got wine?

that we achieved the original intention, which was to show politicians in the round, to show the interaction between the politics and the politicians at home with their children, and the stresses and strains on the rest of their lives, which show that, funnily enough, politicians are human beings."

In spite of the informal shooting, the two 50-minute programmes are not video diaries because the BBC kept full editorial control, although

the candidates could express any reservations they might have had.

As a result, the incident when an over-enthusiastic supporter of Andrew George, the Liberal Democrat MP for St Ives, burns a Tory poster at the election-night party has not made it. And it seems there was no usable footage when Kim Howells forgot to engage the handbrake of his car and saw it gently roll downhill while he was talking to camera.

One controversial piece of film

Involving the unsuccessful Conservative opponent of the Home Secretary Jack Straw in Blackburn is in the film. Geeta Sidhu gained the impression that someone in the Labour campaign was saying that she was anti-Muslim, and she flipped.

She retaliated by going around Blackburn in a loudspeaker van, saying: "Don't vote for a Jew. Jack Straw is a Jew. Jews are the enemy of the Muslims."

Sidhu, who lost heavily, later regretted her outburst and told Joan Bamber, 60, the former teacher filming her: "I said it because I was furious. I must admit, I wish I hadn't done it."

The amateur camera operators seem to have enjoyed themselves greatly in their roles; sometimes Bamber was even heard to say: "Roll, baby, roll" as she was starting to film.

The outdoor scenes in the Howells campaign are by Steve Carter, a retired aircraft engineer, who found the process tiring and demanding, yet exhilarating.

"I was amazed how much work went into it. To be a professional cameraman, you must be dedicated. I felt the strain. I was totally drained."

Now Charles Miller is working on another informal history — the story of the Labour Defence Review, filmed from inside the Ministry of Defence. But this time — partly for reasons of confidentiality and security — Miller will be operating the camera himself.

● *Campaign Confessions* will be shown on BBC2 on December 27 and 28 at 4.25pm.



Fleet Street turns on Tony

New Labour is providing the most prim, priggish and paternalist Government of this country since Oliver Cromwell — Alan Watkins in *The Independent* on Sunday. "Mr Robinson's actions shame himself, his Government and the principles on which his party and democratic governance stand. Better can be expected of those who hold public office in a democracy" — *The Observer*. "Mr Blair has many strengths. Among his greatest weaknesses is an obsession with not looking weak" — Andrew Rawnsley, *The Observer*.

There has been no more cheering development for the health and reputation of the British press in 1997 than the sudden recognition, especially by editors and commentators writing from the Left, that one of the historic duties of newspapers is to subject all governments to the most rigorous scrutiny.

Most editors were so exhilarated by the size of Tony Blair's triumph — or so mesmerised and inhibited by their failure to judge the mood of the people — that critical judgment was almost suspended after Labour's May 1 triumph.

Yet a government with so big a majority can easily be tempted to exercise power arrogantly. Its leading members can compare themselves with Cardinal Wolsey, its spin-doctors may think they can always fix or distort the news agenda. As Harold Macmillan observed, however, it is "events" that upset governments and "events" — the Formula One affair, the tax affairs of Geoffrey Robinson, the fate of lone parents and Labour's attack on John Humphrys after his Harriet Harman interview — have conspired to end Fleet Street's three-year honeymoon with Blair.

Suddenly, the British press has reverted to its proper role as gadfly to government, and the critics and satirists have come out of the closet. *The Times*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, *The Observer* and *The Independent* on Sunday have all suggested that Robinson should resign unless he makes a better case for his offshore trusts. Suddenly, too, the spin-doctors, or their political masters, have lost their touch. Bullying editors, either by threats of libel suits (Robinson to *The Sunday Times* and *The Observer*) or intimidating letters (to Radio 4's *Today* or Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, to all national editors), simply put them on their mettle.

The result of the bullying letter to the *Today* programme was that *The*

Guardian devoted most of its front page to "The man Labour wants to gag" and suggested in a leading article that "arrogance of power" was fast becoming a Labour disease. Robinson's threat of libel was met the following Sunday by further front-page revelations in *The Sunday Times* and *The Observer*, a three-page investigation in Saturday's *Times*, and still more interest in the other nationals. Events also provided a nightmare conjunction of stories: a minister who (quite legally) avoids tax by announcing new taxes on middle-class savers; and news of million-pound bonuses for City fat cats, combined with cuts in benefits for single mothers.

Since many voters were revolted by City salaries, the moral was obvious. Now Blair had proved himself so merciless with the poor, argued Polly Toynbee in *The Independent*, he must be even crueler to the rich.

The satirists have also been having fun. Alton Parish News (Incumbent: Rev ARP Blair MA (Oxon)) is coming along nicely in *Private Eye*. "After all, wasn't Mary herself a single mum, and look how she coped, without any help from the State. So remember, it's easier for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven than a poor man (Matthew 5, 28-30, NLB)."

In *The Daily Telegraph* Craig Brown was predicting next year's news — when the Queen delivers her Christmas Day broadcast in informal conversation with Blair. "These broadcasts to the nation are universally popular," explains Mr Blair, smiling to camera while putting a welcoming arm around the Queen's shoulder. "And this year I am delighted that Her Majesty is able to join me as my special guest."

The serious point was stated in a classic leading article on the duties of the press written by John Thaddeus Delane, Editor of *The Times*, in 1852. Delane had been rebuked by Lord Derby, soon to become Prime Minister, for the "gross irresponsibility of comments made by *The Times* on Louis Napoleon."

"The press could not enter close or binding alliances with any statesmen of the day, nor surrender its permanent interests to the convenience of the ephemeral power of any government," he wrote. "The duty of the journalist is the same as that of the historian — to seek out the truth, above all things, and to present to his readers not such things as statecraft would wish them to know but the truth as near as he can attain it."

Christmas up for copywrite

Adland Christians want to reclaim the festival for Christ. Meg Carter reports

To some it is an unholy alliance. Yet a growing number of churches are adopting sophisticated advertising and marketing techniques to encourage more people to go to church. Luckily, they are attracting support from an unusual quarter — the advertising industry, where a group of Christians are donating their time and expertise.

"It's like a normal ad agency," explains Chas Bayfield, a creative at the London ad agency HHCL & Partners who is also a member of Christians in Media (CIM), an unofficial ad agency providing media communications to Christian causes. "We are believers and creatives, account planners and handlers, and media specialists who develop these campaigns in our spare time."

CIM knows the product it advertises inside and out and so can "push things a little further," Bayfield says. "Outsiders tend to believe in old stereotypes and to be overly cautious. We see beyond that."

CIM was set up four years ago by Francis Goodwin, managing director of the poster contractor Maiden Outdoor. He was involved in church advertising, providing hoardings for free. He placed a letter in the trade magazine *Campaign*, calling for others to support the cause. Its latest work is "Copywriting Christmas", an advertising campaign launched this week by the Churches Advertising Network, an affiliation of representatives from the Anglican, Roman Catholic, Baptist, Methodist and Free Churches of Britain that has co-ordinated Christmas and Easter campaigns to boost church attendance for the past seven years.

This year's ads are about reclaim-



The Copywriting Christmas campaign, launched by the Churches Advertising Network, an affiliation of representatives from various denominations

ing Christmas for Jesus, says the Rev Tom Ambrose, director of communications for the Church of England Diocese of Ely and a member of the network. "Copyright law protects the products of someone's skill, creativity, labour and time. We reckon that that just about sums up God's input into Christmas and we are laying claim to that right."

Christmas has been hijacked by commercial interests, he believes. Just this week a poster for Marks & Spencer, which replaces the "a" in Christmas with M&S's trademark ampersand, was criticised by church leaders. "Our message is that Christ-

mas should be about the real thing," Mr Ambrose adds, unwittingly borrowing Coca-Cola's famous slogan.

As with previous campaigns, Copywriting Christmas was produced with no budget. The network relies instead on donated time and services. Once a creative approach is agreed, CIM distributes a brochure to 30,000 churches. This gives details of items such as posters, bumper stickers, flyers, cards and a radio ad. Individual churches then buy what they want. The funds raised cover the cost of producing the materials.

"It's a very difficult brief. The ads must appeal to outsiders, who we

want to come to church, but we must not frighten off people within the church," Ambrose admits.

Last year's ad was a case in point. It had a cartoon of the three kings, with the line: "Bad hair day? You're a virgin, you've just given birth and now three kings have shown up. Find out the happy ending at a church near you." It failed to secure ministers' support, despite positive press coverage.

Another complication, says Mr Ambrose, is that "it's not just about selling a single brand, like Heinz. We're providing materials for many denominations."



A Christian circle of friends

Creators of the Levi's ads stitch up a sexy deal

■ TOP advertising network bosses will be busy this week after missing out on the chance to acquire a slice of, arguably, the sexiest ad agency in the world.

Britain's Barle Bogle Hegarty, famous for the likes of Levi's, Audi, Boddingtons and One 2 One, has finally succumbed after years of relentless courting from virtually every major player. It is to sell a 49 per cent share of its equity to the Chicago-based Leo Burnett network for an undisclosed sum (somewhere close to £25 million would be a good estimate).

BBH is the agency that many in the business — particularly creatives, who actually make the ads — see as a role model. Its consistent focus on business independence and its creative positioning earned it a reputation for integrity and excellence.

Since its 1982 launch, it has cleaned up at countless advertising awards ceremonies. Its glossy, art-directed work epitomised the 1980s. Think of Levi's "laundrette" and "bath" commercials, the bloke on the Harley rescuing his girlfriend from the City dealing room, the K Shoes ad with the short-skirted woman cutting the balls off her boss's executive toy, "vorsprung durch technik".

The agency broke out of its fashion niche to become a main-

stream player in the UK, albeit with mixed success working for the likes of Asda, WH Smith, Cadbury and NatWest. But, like its peers, it was destined never to break into the UK top ten without being part of an international network.

In the 1990s, BBH began to attract international clients on the back of the Levi's success. It used the annual Cannes Advertising Festival to showcase its wares, to great effect. It has twice been

international agency of the year at Cannes and twice *Campaign*'s UK agency of the year.

BBH has led the trend that has seen small, local agencies creating work for the world (Levi's, Polaroid, Lego). It set up in Singapore in 1996 and plans to launch in the United States next year. Despite this, BBH has had to acknowledge that a relationship with a multinational is essential in order to have an effective global media delivery system. Leo Burnett seems a



BBH began to attract international clients on the back of Levi's success



perfect fit. The number one agency brand in the US, it has 83 offices in 72 countries and has built a reputation for solidity and integrity based on having relatively few, large clients, such as Procter & Gamble, Kellogg's, McDonald's and Pillsbury.

Its reputation for never losing business took a knock this year, however, when it lost McDonald's, United Airlines and Amerihealth computers business in the US. Chicago management responded quickly by shaking up the way the company bought media.

This deal will bring in a significant extra global media revenue stream, but its primary function is to make Leo Burnett sexier by association, especially as BBH made the approach.

BBH now has the money for expansion and, crucially, a deal allowing it to retain a 51 per cent controlling stake in perpetuity. The other agency big cheeses may bitch, but they would not have agreed to the minority stake. Perhaps the season of goodwill has



got to me, but it really does look like a win-win for both parties.

■ FOR how much longer will it be good to talk? Rumours abound that BT is to take a new look at the estimated £160 million a year it spends on advertising and marketing.

But don't hold your breath. The trade press got overexcited this week, linking a rethink on the way BT buys media space with that £160 million to its ad account, held by Britain's largest agency, Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO.

Both accounts will be subject to statutory review, but the space-buying business will be reassessed in 1998, and AMV is considered to be safe until the year after at the very least.

Much as the public might seek respite from the "it's good to talk" mantra, it is unlikely that a company that has committed itself to doubling its ad spend, claiming a £6 return on every £1 spent on ads, would ditch such an apparently successful campaign.

■ IF EVER a company should ditch its advertising, that company is the RAC. This year's pretentious campaign of documentaries (its description) had "empowerer's new clothes" written all over it.

Nobody, it appears, had the courage to tell the marketing department that the public doesn't give a fig that the RAC now sells bicycles, or what some internationally renowned guru thinks of the future. People want to know how long it will take the RAC to get there when they break down, and how much it will cost.

Inevitably, a new marketing director will arrive, and will



Talking has proved good for BT

review all the work. Do not expect the documentaries to survive. In fact, the RAC is a strong contender for *The Times* worst ad of the year award (full best and worst lists on January 2).

■ THERE is endless rubbish written about strained times in the advertising and media industries; laments for the death of the liquid lunch; moans that they don't throw parties like they did in the good old days (ie, five years before the date of the moan).

What drive. Who are these journalists? The Christmas party season began in early November and continues unabated. Any vaguely fashionable restaurant (and Langham's is still heaving long after lunch). Evening parties are swarming with drunken, coked-up revellers who haven't heard that adland's in trouble.

Actually, the wildest parties have not been agency dos, but those thrown by media owners. Party of the season was arguably Channel 5's, where the highlight was the sticky situation on the stairwell, where the number of stripped and stranded modern young things rearing each other will have given David Elstein great cause for optimism.

● Stefano Hatfield is Editor of *Campaign*.

FOOTBALL: LIVERPOOL PRODIGY WARNED BY ENGLAND COACH

Caution from Hoddle challenges pace of Owen's emergence

BY MATT DICKINSON

WHEN it comes to Michael Owen, there is no doubt that Glenn Hoddle likes what he sees. It is what the eye cannot detect, though, the inner workings of the young striker's mind, that the England coach remains uncertain about and it was the cause yesterday of a surprise shot across the Liverpool player's bows.

That there is little wrong with Owen's feet was proved on Wednesday night when, three days after his eighteenth birthday, he produced a remarkably assured performance in England Under-21s' 4-2 victory over Greece, his exceptional pace a threat for defenders of any age or calibre.

Keeping his size 6½ boots rooted to the ground, though, is evidently a troubling topic that has done the rounds at Lancaster Gate and it was something that Hoddle unexpectedly brought into the public domain yesterday.

"There are certain things he needs to stamp out of his game and from his off-the-pitch situation as well," Hoddle said, raising more questions than he answered. "I'm not going into details, but he's not the finished article that everyone says he is. The boy has extreme potential and extreme talent, as has Rio Ferdi-

nand [the West Ham United defender]. But we will be keeping a steady eye on them to see how they progress.

"We have spoken about so many youngsters before and the potential has not come through. It is very difficult nowadays with everyone hyping things up and the minute they think they have arrived they stop still. They [Owen and Ferdinand] must not allow that to happen.



Owen: precocious talent

"Players like Alan Shearer, Teddy Sheringham and even Stuart Pearce at his age are still learning things about the game. I am still learning, so for any young player to think he has arrived is wrong. We can't give them a pill to learn. It only comes from the player.

"The runs young Michael makes are exceptional for a player of his age. He really has a good perception of the game. But he is a lad who I have seen in the past in a couple of situations show he is still only a youngster and there is still room for improvement."

Given that Ferdinand had to be disciplined by Hoddle before he had even been capped, it is safe to assume that the England coach was not issuing idle threats.

It also, perhaps, reflected that Owen plays for Liverpool, a club not renowned for the self-discipline of its players. Jamie Carragher and Danny Murphy were two of the culprits ticked off after high links among the England under-21 players on the trip to Rome, while the Spice Boy tag — whether it be a label or deserved nickname — will remain with the Anfield dressing-room as long as the team continues to underachieve.

Owen, so far, has shown no signs of straying from the straight and narrow. Indeed, at Anfield he is mocked as an Alan Shearer clone as much for his straight — some might even say dull — image as his knack for scoring goals.

Dealing with the prying and intrusions that are the flip-side to earning thousands of pounds a week is likely to prove as testing as maintaining the precocious talent that has already made him a long shot for inclusion in the senior World Cup squad for France.

Everton, struggling in the lower reaches of the FA Carling Premiership, yesterday denied that their captain, Gary Speed, has held talks with Newcastle United.

The Wales international midfielder player had been linked with a move to St James' Park in an exchange deal involving Darren Peacock, the Newcastle defender.

It was a lucrative time to be a plumber in the Yorkshire village of Emley yesterday as heavy rain followed the snow of Wednesday afternoon. Peter Matthews, nevertheless, had no hesitation in downing his tools to spend the day away from work. As the chairman of Emley, Matthews was determined to enjoy the aftermath of their heroic victory on penalties against Lincoln City, which earned an FA Cup third-round tie against West Ham United. Emley won 4-3 in the shoot-out after the teams had finished level at 2-2.

"There are work days and there are Emley Football Club days, and this is very definitely a football day," Matthews, revelling in the calls from reporters and well-wishers, said.

Gross warms to Pleat as potential colleague

BY MATT DICKINSON AND RICHARD HOBSON

CHRISTIAN GROSS, who appears to need as much help as he can get in his worsening predicament as Tottenham Hotspur manager, has met David Pleat to discuss the club's vacant position of director of football.

While Gross claimed no appointment was imminent, it looks likely that Pleat, a former Spurs manager himself, who was sacked as Sheffield Wednesday manager earlier this season, will take up the new position next month.

The pair appear to have bonded well in their two-and-a-half-hour chat, with Gross claiming: "It was very interesting. He is a man who loves soccer and anybody who loves soccer is interesting to me. Before I came to the club, Alan Sugar [the chairman] said that he needed someone in this position. Maybe David Pleat will do it, but there is no decision. We need to talk more to get the feeling together."

Gross stressed that while Pleat would have youth and scouting responsibilities, he would not negotiate contracts with players or dictate who to buy. The demarcation of roles clearly needs further discussion with the Swiss coach admitting that Pleat may find it difficult not to meddle in first-team affairs.

"Over the last 24 years he was on the pitch as a manager and when

you have that job from day to day, it is an obsession and very difficult to stop," he said. "It is not easy to take a different role. Scouting is a problem we have to review here and David knows the English game and players very well."

Gross has yet to make a signing at Spurs and, despite talking with Everton, is unlikely to bring in Andy Hinchcliffe, the left-back. Howard Kendall, the Everton manager, offered a swap deal in the hope of luring Les Ferdinand, Chris Armstrong or Steffen Iversen, but Ferdinand is staying put and the other two are injured.

Fears that Gary McAllister would miss the World Cup finals next summer have been removed after keyhole surgery on his injured knee, which revealed a small cartilage tear rather than ligament damage. McAllister, the Coventry City and Scotland midfielder, will be out of action for two months.

Coventry have completed the signing of George Boateng, the Holland Under-21 captain. Boateng, 22, who can play at right back or in midfield, cost £250,000 from Feyenoord, who had originally valued him at £4 million. Boateng, who would have become a free agent next summer when his contract expired, rejected an offer from Udinese, the Italian Serie A side.



John Popely and Blushing Groom in full flight in the Christmas Candle Stakes yesterday

Showtime races back to form to give Skelton cracking start

BY JENNY MACARTHUR

NICK SKELTON, who said he had barely time even to look at the schedule for the Olympia showjumping championships before his arrival at the show yesterday because he had been too busy moving house, produced a dazzling turn of foot on his Olympic horse, Virtual Village Showtime, to win the Christmas Candle Stakes, the main event of the opening performance yesterday.

Skelton, who has been preoccupied with his move "down the road" to a house in the village of Lowsonford, Warwickshire, had also been concerned that Showtime might not have had sufficient preparation for the show. The mare, 13, who Skelton says, has "never been the same" since competing in the Olympic Games in Atlanta last year, suffered a bout of anaemia after her appearance at the Toronto show in Canada in early November. She had been out in the field recuperating until last week when she was brought in and hastily prepared for Olympia.

Her scintillating performance yesterday, however, betrayed no sign of any loss of form. Skelton, the seventh to go, produced a breathtaking round over the nine-fence course to finish in 43.75sec. "She may not be a Dollar Girl or a St James," Skelton said, referring to two of his former top horses, "but

she's a trier and can win some useful classes on her day."

Their time was only put in perspective when a succession of top partnerships — including Michael Whitaker on his Brussels Grand Prix winner, Virtual Village Ashley, and Ludger Beerbaum, the European champion from Germany, on Sprehe Rush On, tried and failed to match his time.

Piet Raymakers, of Holland, a member of the gold medal-winning team at the 1992 Olympic Games — and the winner of three Volvo World Cup qualifiers last year — came closest, finishing second in 47.12sec — some 3.37sec behind Skelton. Beertshuis, one of the favourites for the Volvo World Cup qualifier tomorrow, was a close third.

Skelton's win is a timely filip for the Warwickshire-based rider. In

addition to the traumas of moving house he has had a lean year in the sport after the sale of two leading horses — Dollar Girl and Tinka's Boy — in the past 12 months. Having rarely been out of the top ten in the world rankings in recent years, he has now dropped to No 18.

"I always knew I was in for a difficult year after the sale of Tinka's Boy," he said, "but I've got two promising young horses — Giselle and Cartagena — for next year." More immediately, he has to choose between Showtime and Zalta — the horse on which he won the Vink Masters at Olympia last year — for the World Cup qualifier tomorrow. He will make the choice today.

Earlier John Whitaker, who is seeking his first win in the Olympia World Cup qualifier, made a rousing start to the show when he and his daughter, Louise, 17, comfortably won the final of The Petplan Family Pairs Relay. Louise's lightning fast round against the clock on Virtual Village Deep Heat made up the vital time lost when Whitaker, on Virtual Village Randi, overshot the changeover.

In a successful day for the family Michael Whitaker, who paired up with John's son, Robert, 15, was third behind the two Essex-based sisters, Michelle Lipman and Annette Lewis.

RESULTS

CHRISTMAS CANDLE STAKES: 1. Virtual Village Showtime (N Skelton, GB) 0 in 43.75sec; 2. Jover's Idam (P Raymakers, Holland) 0 in 47.12; 3. Sprehe Rush On (L Beertshuis, Ger) 0 in 47.27.

THE PETPLAN FAMILY PAIRS RELAY: 1. Virtual Village Deep Heat and Virtual Village Randi (J Whitaker and J Whitaker) 62.70; 2. Innes and Gold Horton (M Lipman and A Lewis); 3. Forever Kalle and Virtual Village Elton (P and M Whitaker).

SPORT IN BRIEF

Hudson still in intensive care

ALAN HUDSON, the former England football international, was still critically ill in hospital yesterday after being injured in a road accident. His condition remained unchanged and he was continuing to be treated in the intensive care unit, a spokesman at the Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel said.

The 46-year-old former Chelsea and Arsenal midfielder player needed a 14-hour operation to remove a blood clot from his brain after being in an accident with a car near his home in East London on Monday evening. He also suffered internal injuries.

Augusta bound

■ **GOLF:** Darren Clarke has received an invitation to the Masters next April. It is the first time that Clarke, 29, has been invited to Augusta. "It is a dream come true," Clarke said. The invitation to the first of the year's four major championships is an acknowledgement of his standing in the game. Clarke was fourth in the European money-list, second equal with Jesper Parnevik in the Open and was a member of the victorious Europe Ryder Cup team in September. He is ranked 36th in the world.

Stewart deals

■ **MOTOR RACING:** Jackie Stewart yesterday unveiled two new sponsorship deals to strengthen the finances of his Formula One team. The telecommunications company, MCI, and the Lear Corporation, one of the world's leading suppliers of automotive interior systems, will support Stewart Grand Prix. Stewart revealed that he has not discussed backing from the tobacco industry in future, even though his team was one of the few on the grid last season without any form of tobacco backing.

Sampras back

■ **TENNIS:** Pete Sampras, the world No 1, expects to start practising again this weekend after injuring a calf muscle playing for the United States in the Davis Cup final against Sweden last month. Sampras said yesterday that he expects to play in the Australian Open next month.



"POUR BEFORE CHILLING"

SERVING SUGGESTION

Asking previously unthinkable questions

Television has been very well served by the environmental lobby over the past 20 years. All that videotape, courtesy of every agency from the BBC Natural History Unit to Greenpeace. All those stunning images, of everything from whales to oil slicks, stricken birds to smouldering rainforests. There had to be a day of reckoning and that day has come. Come and go on two series, *Scare Stories* on BBC2 and *Against Nature* on Channel 4, have been revisiting environmental issues from a perspective less liberal, or less alarmist (choose your word), than the one with which we are familiar. Both series have just finished, so perhaps television will now return to the familiar ground of shedding video tears for our planet. If so, it leaves some important questions hanging in the air.

Last night *Scare Stories* ended with *Sinking the Ark*, which asked

whether mankind had not bent too far backwards in the direction of species protection. The programme served the useful function of explaining how massive publicity coups had elevated animals to a status seemingly higher than that of mere people, but of course a cause is not flawed just because it enjoys slick publicity.

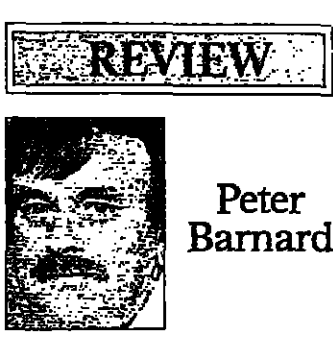
The programme was excellent while it was focusing on the issue of the whale, not quite so coherent when it tried to reinforce the point using several other creatures. The whale and its alleged saving by campaigners offers an object lesson in the manipulation of human emotions and there is no better example of the absurdities that some in the environmental lobby have perpetrated.

Roger Payne, a marine biologist, discovered in the 1960s that whales could sing. As a result, "Suddenly one day I decided that I would spend the rest of my life trying to

do something to improve the way people look at whales," Payne has been as good as his word. But if the ability to sing automatically justified protected status, Des O'Connor would be grade one listed.

Beyond question, the whale, with its enormous appetite, occupies an important position in the food chain. But that is not why governments have been lobbied, not to say terrorised, by advocates of saving the whale (in some waters, they are threatened by over-population). The media, and not just television, put the whale on the fashion map by showing its great dignified torso and playing its haunting tunes. The food chain had nothing to do with it.

Similarly, as the programme showed, campaigns to save the tiger have skirted round the unfortunate fact that tigers eat people. When large areas of India and



Africa were turned into reservations and the hunting of tigers was banned, the increasing population of tigers killed the cattle of farmers whose tribes had occupied the land for a thousand years. But nobody launched the African Farmer with a gala dinner at the Dorchester. Instead, the programme reported, one million people were forced to use sticks and move somewhere else so that the protec-

ed tiger could roam (and cash-rich tourists could continue to safari). In the West, people have more prosaic but equally important questions to resolve, such as: will my doctor do me any good? *Natural Born Healers* (Channel 4) is an interesting series about alternative medicine. Unlike alternative medicine, we can define what it is an alternative to: it is an alternative to having a GP examine you and write a prescription. Last night the series took Roy Haggerty, a sufferer for three years from chronic fatigue syndrome, or ME, and sent him to Dr Julian Kenyan, a practitioner of complementary medicine, for a three-month course of treatment. By the end of it Roy seemed better and was able to mow his lawn, whereas before he became tired at the sight of the lawnmower.

Roy's GP, Dr Peter May, was not very impressed when his course of action began and his

view did not appear to have changed when it ended: "So (Kenyan) is putting out wacky ideas, completely out of the blue and if he (Haggerty) gets better (Kenyan) will say they've got some basis in reality. Bizarre."

The real difference in approach is that Kenyan uses imagination in choosing a treatment whereas a GP's training is to treat demonstrable symptoms on a scientific basis. I would not presume to choose between these approaches, but if something works then it must be a legitimate treatment, even if nobody can properly explain why the treatment works.

Now that winter has finally arrived, flies-on-the-wall are dying off. The latest to go the way of all such documentaries is *Dover* (ITV) which has been a fly on the wall of our busiest port these past few weeks. I missed the earlier episodes but if last night's

finale sums up the whole I can only say that it is surprising how difficult it can be to stay awake for 30 minutes.

The arrival of a cruise liner which had to discharge 2,400 passengers and sail again 13 hours later with a new passenger complement might have offered rich pickings to the cameras, but all we got was a few passengers playing hunt-the-suitcase. There was also a poignant segment filmed on the day of the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales as the port organised, with great efficiency and tact, the observing of the national one-minute silence.

Perhaps that cast a pall over the whole programme. Certainly there was little excitement to be had from the only other incident: customs men opening up china elephants to find cannabis hidden inside. That had the appearance of being filmed by an earlier fly on a different wall.

REVIEW

Peter Barnard

- BBC1**
- 6.00am Business Breakfast (48819)
 - 7.00am BBC Breakfast News (41277)
 - 9.00am Good Living Last in series (1066722)
 - 9.25am Style Challenge Two children bound for Lapland (1082529)
 - 9.50am Kilroy (T) (2720819)
 - 10.30am Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) (1427884)
 - 10.55am The Really Useful Show (T) (6589258)
 - 11.35am Change That Transforming the furniture of celebrity guests: Jane Wintfield, John Leslie and Anna Walker (3715109)
 - 12.00am News (T) and weather (9239616)
 - 12.05pm Call My Bluff (2404109)
 - 12.35pm Give Us A Clue Last in series (5040797)
 - 1.00am News (T) and weather (44564)
 - 1.30am Regional News (17282836)
 - 1.40am The Weather Show (86013797)
 - 1.45am Neighbours (T) (1368172)
 - 2.10am Petrol (T) (1711242)
 - 3.00am Vets In Practice Trude discovers she has achieved celebrity status (T) (4971)
 - 3.30am Playdays (7549905) 3.50am Dear Mr Barker (2889797) 4.05am The All New Popeye Show (2945068) 4.10am Casper (3154722) 4.35am Record Breakers Last in series (2421432) 5.00am Newsround (T) (3030187) 5.10am Blue Peter (T) (6065155)
 - 5.35am Neighbours (T) (1315703)
 - 6.00am News (T) and weather (426)
 - 6.30am Regional News (936)
 - 7.00am Weekend Watchdog with Anne Robinson (T) (2160)
 - 7.30am Top of the Pops (T) (800)
 - 8.00am **CHOICE** 999 Lifesavers: Food Safety Reconstructions of a couple's wedding celebrations ruined by a salmonella outbreak, and a seven-year-old boy struck down with E.coli food poisoning (T) (5600)
 - 8.30am Only Fools and Horses The Trotter brothers attempt to help a German dancer in distress (T) (7635)
 - 9.00am News (T) and weather (6997)
 - 9.30am **CHOICE** Hetty Wainthropp Investigates: Flatlifts Lancashire's answer to Miss Marple does her best to help out and attempts to help a 'road rage' victim (T) (288345)
 - 10.25am Escape from Alcatraz (1979) Clint Eastwood stars in this drama based on the true story of a convict's attempt to break out of the notorious high-security prison on Alcatraz Island. Directed by Don Siegel (245616) **WALLS: 10.25am For One Night Only** West End star Rex Jones performs a selection of showstoppers. Last in series (325797) **10.55am FILM: Escape from Alcatraz** (2766260) **12.40am FILM: Jinxed** (973255) 2.15am News headlines and weather (856038) 2.20am BBC News 24
 - 12.10am **discovery** (1982) Comedy, with Betty Midler. A black-glove detective sets out to solve the murder of a customer who's on a seemingly never-ending winning streak, in an attempt to break his lucky run. Directed by Don Siegel (T) (933407)
 - 1.45am Weather (7057117)
 - 1.50am BBC News 24

VideoPlus+ and the **Video PlusCodes**. The numbers and each TV programme listing are VideoPlus+ numbers, which allow you to programme your video recorder instantly with a VideoPlus+ handset. In the Video PlusCode for the programme you wish to record VideoPlus+ (V), PlusCode (P) and Video Programmer are trademarks of Gemstar Development Ltd.

- BBC2**
- 6.00am Social Sciences: Global Media (37161)
 - 7.00am See Hear Breakfast News (T) (3015906)
 - 7.15am Teletubbies (T) (2202906) 7.40am Yaky Ducky (T) (8662567) 8.05am Smart (T) (6784884) 8.30am William's Wish Wellingtons (T) (2337987) 8.35am Wishing Well (T) (977153) 8.45am The Record (319585) 9.10am The Fugitive (T) (1662906) 10.00am Teletubbies (25667)
 - 10.30am A Day at the Races (1937, b/w) Marx Brothers comedy set in a sanatorium. Directed by Sam Wood (19583548)
 - 11.15pm Wear It Well (T) (8043074) 12.30am Working Lunch (22513) 1.00am The Little Polar Bear (3379918) 1.05am Pingu (T) (3379945) 1.10am Hammer & Home (7337451) 1.30am A River Somewhere: Fly-fishing on Los Riosques Island, Venezuela (21884) 2.00am Take a Meal: Spain's Rioja region (9252972) 2.15am Going, Going, Gone (4592567) 2.40am News (T) 2.45am Oldie TV (T) (5735703) 3.25am News (T) 3.30am The Village (884)
 - 4.00am Ready Steady Cook (819) 4.30am Through the Keyhole (2420703) 4.55am Esther (5816229) 5.30am Today's Day (155)
 - 6.00am The Simpsons Homer becomes a department store Santa Claus (T) (187345)
 - 6.20am Star Trek (T) (802451)
 - 7.15am Electric Circus (547221)
 - 7.30am Earth and Life: Science of Climate Evidence discovered in the Antarctic and under the ocean suggests that climate changes have been going on for thousands of years without any threat to life on Earth. Are we on the edge of global warming? Last in series (T) (432)
 - 8.00am **discovery** War Walks II Richard Holmes revisits London during the Blitz of December 1940 (T) (3242)
 - 8.30am Geoff Hamilton's Paradise Gardens (T) (5277)
 - 9.00am Shooting Stars Vic and Bob welcome Vanessa Feltz, Fred Tatler, Louise Wener and Mark Williams (T) (4529)
 - Panto - Fast Show style** (9.30pm)
 - 9.30am The Fast Show Comedy with Paul Whitehouse, Charlie Higson and Caroline Aherne (T) (15277)
 - 10.00am Have I Got News for You Last in the series of the satirical quiz (96600)
 - 10.30am Newsnight (T) (660345)
 - 11.15am The A Force Roy Diamond and Paul Boulay introduce the best in black entertainment (410093)
 - 12.05am The Trial (1962) Orson Welles's Kafka adaptation about an anonymous man arrested by a mysterious authority and put on trial for an offence he knows nothing about. With Anthony Perkins and Jeanne Moreau (443489)
 - 2.40am Weather (3208652)

- HTV**
- 6.00am GMTV (2581180)
 - 9.25am Supermarket Sweep (T) (1091277)
 - 9.55am Regional News (T) (7844819)
 - 10.00am The Time, The Place (16033)
 - 10.30am This Morning (T) (97336109)
 - 12.30pm Regional News (T) (9243819)
 - 12.30am News (T) and weather (513272)
 - 12.55am The Fashion Police (T) (5044513) 1.25am Home and Away (T) (993726) 1.50am Murder, She Wrote: A Christmas Gift (T) (8629180) 2.40am Dr Quinn, Medicine Woman (T) (5730258)
 - 3.20am News (T) (3373557)
 - 3.25am Regional News (T) (1868708)
 - 3.30am Jays' World (2976277) 3.40am Titch (8015819) 3.50am CIVV Awards 1997 (1773422) 5.10am Caring at Christmas (T) (9101033)
 - 5.40am News (T) and weather (598109)
 - 6.00am Home and Away (T) (993726)
 - 6.25am Regional Weather (T) (54342)
 - 6.30am Regional News (T) (154)
 - 7.00am Bruce's Price Is Right (T) (4548)
 - 7.30am Coronation Street Judy is desperate to get Kate back (T) (258)
 - 8.00am The Bill The money from a robbery six years ago has never been found. Can the thief's grandson help Beech and Carter to discover its whereabouts? (T) (7068)
 - 8.30am Blind Men The sales team is facing redundancies (T) (2703)
 - Penny Smith looks at policing** (9pm)
 - 9.00am Most Wanted Dermot Murnaghan and Penny Smith discuss how policing has changed in the 1990s (T) (7154)
 - 10.00am News (T) and weather (50426)
 - 10.30am Regional News (971513)
 - 10.40am Shattered Dreams (1980) with Lindsay Wagner and Michael Nouri. Fact-based drama about a woman who suffers mental and physical abuse from her husband, a senior law official. Directed by Robert Iscove (83172635)
 - 12.30am **discovery** (1989) with Patrick Dempsey and Kate Jackson. Comedy about a college boy who is left to fend for himself in the real world when his parents refuse to pay his course fees. When he takes a job delivering pizzas, he suddenly finds himself much in demand by the bored housewives on his route. Directed by Joan Micklin Silver (450759)
 - 2.20am Between the Darkness and the Dawn (1955) starring Elizabeth Montgomery Wagner and James Naughton. Drama about a woman who wakes from a 20-year coma to find that her high-school sweetheart has married her sister. Directed by Peter Levin (863555)
 - 4.05am Collins and Maconie's Movie Club (T) (5811631)
 - 4.35am Coach (7985056)
 - 5.00am Coronation Street (T) (48662)
 - 5.30am ITN News



Penny Smith looks at policing (9pm)

- CENTRAL**
- As HTV West except:
 - 12.55pm-1.25am A Country Practice (5044513)
 - 2.50-3.20am Our House (4854108)
 - 5.10-5.40am Shortland Street (9101093)
 - 6.25-7.00am Central News (960703)
 - 10.40am Film: Innocent Blood (86130345)
 - 12.00am Film: Too Good to Be True (733594)
 - 2.20am The LADS (5217662)
 - 2.55am Box Office America (1681049)
 - 3.20am Central Jobfinder '97 (254204)
 - WESTCOUNTRY**
 - As HTV West except:
 - 12.55am Home and Away (5044513)
 - 1.25am Wild About Devon (90304677)
 - 1.55am Westcountry Update (82837324)
 - 2.25-3.20am Blue Heelers (1898345)
 - 5.10-5.40am Home and Away (9101093)
 - 6.00-7.00am Westcountry Live (80278)
 - 12.30am Film: Loverboy (450759)
 - MERIDIAN**
 - As HTV West except:
 - 12.55pm-1.25am Shortland Street (5044513)
 - 1.50am Perfectly Pets (28217113)
 - 2.20-3.20am Highway to Heaven (8650155)
 - 5.10-5.40am Home and Away (9101093)
 - 6.00-7.00am Meridian Tonight (80278)
 - 12.30am Film: Loverboy (450759)
 - ANGLIA**
 - As HTV West except:
 - 12.55pm-1.25am What's My Line? (5044513)
 - 1.50am Backstage (28217113)
 - 2.20-3.20am Highway to Heaven (8650155)
 - 5.10-5.40am Shortland Street (9101093)
 - 6.25-7.00am Anglia News (690703)
 - 12.30am Film: Loverboy (450759)
 - S4C**
 - Starts: 7.00am The Big Breakfast (34987)
 - 9.00am Something So Right (4936529)
 - 9.55am Film: Irish Eyes are Smiling (1944) starring Monty Woolley, Dick Haymes and June Haver (41688113)
 - 11.30am Sophie's Meat Course (3890)
 - 12.00am Sesame Street (93567)
 - 12.30pm Ricki Lake (20109)
 - 1.00am Slot Mefthin (50396074)
 - 1.15am Slot Symbalou Sall (50391529)
 - 1.30am Film: The Moonraker (1958) starring George Baker and Sylvia Sims (45074)
 - 3.00am Movers and Shakers (8839)
 - 3.30am Fifteen-to-One: Champion of Champions (6587451)
 - 4.15am Deals on Wheels (729451)
 - 4.45am Pump (728722)
 - 5.15am Countdown: Grand Final (1793190)
 - 5.50am Newyddion (468722)
 - 6.10am Heno (963682)
 - 7.00am Paboli y Cwm (663155)
 - 7.25am Y Club Rygbi (711180)
 - 8.00am Cwm Gwlad (1638)
 - 8.00am Newyddion (8995)
 - 9.00am Paboli y Cwm (663155)
 - 10.00am Broadsides (762558)
 - 10.35am Friends (594567)
 - 11.05am Father Ted Christmas Special (124703)
 - 12.15am Crapston Villas (7256038)
 - 12.30am TFI Friday (2542638)
 - 1.35am Film: Up the Chastity Belt (875730)

- CHANNEL 5**
- 5.55am Sesame Street (39529)
 - 7.00am The Big Breakfast (34987)
 - 9.00am Something So Right (4936529)
 - 9.55am Irish Eyes are Smiling (1944) with Monty Woolley, Dick Haymes and June Haver. A celebration of the work of Ernest R. Ball, the Irishman from Cleveland who wrote sentimental ballads. Directed by Gregory Raffelt (41688113)
 - 11.30am Sophie's Meat Course (3890) (T) (3890) 12.00am Sesame Street (39529) 12.30pm Light Lunch (T) (618277) 1.35am August's Guests. Animation (65105722)
 - 1.40am Where Do We Go from Here? (1945) with Fred MacMurray. A musical comedy about a would-be GI who is transported back in time by an inept genie. Directed by Gregory Raffelt (8194109)
 - 3.00am Garden Doctors (T) (8839) 3.30am Fifteen-to-One: Champion of Champions (T) (6587451) 4.15am Countdown: Grand Final (T) (7875797) 4.55am Ricki Lake Christmas makeovers (T) (5738797) 5.30am Pet Rescue (T) (451)
 - 6.00am TFI Friday Among the guests is Dale Winton (25600)
 - 7.00am Channel 4 News (T) (819151)
 - 7.55am The Political Slot (265277)
 - 8.00am The Best of Collectors' Lot (T) (1838)
 - 8.30am Brookside Will Max go along with Jacqui's new proposition? (T) (8095)
 - 9.00am **discovery** Friends: The One at the beach house, Rachel becomes jealous of Ross's uninvited girlfriend. Ten Gar makes a guest appearance. Last in series (T) (719335)
 - 9.35am **discovery** Looking Out for Number One Ellen takes advice from a therapist to become more assertive (T) (524451)
 - Kelsey Grammer as Dr Crane** (10pm)
 - 10.00am **discovery** Frasier: Odd Man Out Frasier realises that being single is not all it is cracked up to be. Linda Hamilton guest-stars. Last in series (T) (98068)
 - 10.30am Father Ted Christmas Special The comic clerics become lost in a large store and end up in the lingerie department (T) (8850567)
 - 11.40am Crapston Villas Adult animation (7:10) (T) (912635)
 - 11.55am TFI Friday (T) (562109)
 - 1.00am Up the Chastity Belt (1971) A Middle Ages romp starring Frankie Howerd in the dual roles of the lowly Larkat and the Richard the Lionheart. Directed by Bob Kellet (T) (731662)
 - 2.40am Springhill (5854355)
 - 3.45am The King Steps Out (1936, b/w). A vintage romantic opera starring Grace Moore, Frieda Inescort and Franchot Tone. Directed by Josef von Sternberg (201402)
 - 5.15am Desire (T) (196778)

- CHANNEL 5 ON SATELLITE**
- Channel 5 is now broadcasting on transponder No 83 on the Astra Satellite. Viewers with a Videocrypt decoder will be able to receive the channel free of charge. Frequencies for transponder No 83 are: picture: 10.92075 GHz; sound: 7.02 and 7.20 MHz
- 6.00am 5 News Early (4296567)
 - 7.30am Milkshake! (7403426) 7.35am Adventures of the Bush Patrol (T) (9168819) 8.00am Hava Kazoo (T) (1801613)
 - 8.30am **discovery** WideWorld: Fragile Planet How sandy beaches are constantly changing (8:10) (2251154)
 - 9.00am **discovery** Espresso Consumer affairs (7030819) 10.00am Exclusive (T) (4495258) 10.30am Was It Good for You? (T) (8851398)
 - 11.00am Lezza (3307180) 11.50am Double Espresso (90963451) 12.00am The Bold and the Beautiful (T) (8651190) 12.30pm Family Affairs (T) (1598616)
 - 1.00am 5 News Update (8883806) 1.05am Sunset Beach (T) (4189638) 2.00am 5's Company (3384616)
 - 3.30am **discovery** Card: (1991) starring Susan Hogan, Janet Wright and Lora Schroeder. A sentimental comedy drama following the ups and downs of parental and romantic love across three generations of a large family. Directed by Norman Bailey (4194155)
 - 5.30am White Audience participation quiz (T) (4745180)
 - 6.00am 100 Per Cent (4742093)
 - 6.30am Family Affairs Charlotte and Liam are reunited with their parents (T) (4733345)
 - 7.00am Name That Tune (5101258)
 - 7.30am Exclusive (T) (524451)
 - 8.00am Fame and Fortune The lifestyle of Olivia Newton-John (T) (5110908)
 - 8.30am 5 News (T) (525513)
 - 9.00am **discovery** Sty People (1987) with Barbara Hershey and Jill Clayburgh. A drama about the relationship between a career woman and her 16-year-old daughter. Directed by Andrei Konchalovskiy (10446616)
 - 11.15am La Femme Nikita Adventures of a lethal female secret agent (3333971)
 - 12.00am **discovery** The Dark Zone Stories Sci-fi dramas (8448730)
 - 2.00am Family Sins (1987) starring James Farentino and Jill Eikenberry. A drama that goes under the surface of a supposedly happy family life. Directed by Jerrold Freeman (1940488)
 - 3.40am The Cimarron Kid (1951) A western adventure starring Audie Murphy and Beverly Tyler, directed by Bud Boetticher (52897310)
 - 5.05am Night Stand Spoof chat show (6708020)
 - 5.30am 100 Per Cent (T) (7915556)



Singer Olivia Newton John (8pm)

For further listings see Saturday's Vision

SKY 1

- 6.00am Morning Show (29556) 6.00-6.30am News (29556) 6.30-7.00am News (29556) 7.00-7.30am News (29556) 7.30-8.00am News (29556) 8.00-8.30am News (29556) 8.30-9.00am News (29556) 9.00-9.30am News (29556) 9.30-10.00am News (29556) 10.00-10.30am News (29556) 10.30-11.00am News (29556) 11.00-11.30am News (29556) 11.30-12.00am News (29556) 12.00-12.30am News (29556) 12.30-1.00am News (29556) 1.00-1.30am News (29556) 1.30-2.00am News (29556) 2.00-2.30am News (29556) 2.30-3.00am News (29556) 3.00-3.30am News (29556) 3.30-4.00am News (29556) 4.00-4.30am News (29556) 4.30-5.00am News (29556) 5.00-5.30am News (29556) 5.30-6.00am News (29556) 6.00-6.30am News (29556) 6.30-7.00am News (29556) 7.00-7.30am News (29556) 7.30-8.00am News (29556) 8.00-8.30am News (29556) 8.30-9.00am News (29556) 9.00-9.30am News (29556) 9.30-10.00am News (29556) 10.00-10.30am News (29556) 10.30-11.00am News (29556) 11.00-11.30am News (29556) 11.30-12.00am News (29556) 12.00-12.30am News (29556) 12.30-1.00am News (29556) 1.00-1.30am News (29556) 1.30-2.00am News (29556) 2.00-2.30am News (29556) 2.30-3.00am News (29556) 3.00-3.30am News (29556) 3.30-4.00am News (29556) 4.00-4.30am News (29556) 4.30-5.00am News (29556) 5.00-5.30am News (29556) 5.30-6.00am News (29556) 6.00-6.30am News (29556) 6.30-7.00am News (29556) 7.00-7.30am News (29556) 7.30-8.00am News (29556) 8.00-8.30am News (29556) 8.30-9.00am News (29556) 9.00-9.30am News (29556) 9.30-10.00am News (29556) 10.00-10.30am News (29556) 10.30-11.00am News (29556) 11.00-11.30am News (29556) 11.30-12.00am News (29556) 12.00-12.30am News (29556) 12.30-1.00am News (29556) 1.00-1.30am News (29556) 1.30-2.00am News (29556) 2.00-2.30am News (29556) 2.30-3.00am News (29556) 3.00-3.30am News (29556) 3.30-4.00am News (29556) 4.00-4.30am News (29556) 4.30-5.00am News (29556) 5.00-5.30am News (29556) 5.30-6.00am News (29556) 6.00-6.30am News (29556) 6.30-7.00am News (29556) 7.00-7.30am News (29556) 7.30-8.00am News (29556) 8.00-8.30am News (29556) 8.30-9.00am News (29556) 9.00-9.30am News (29556) 9.30-10.00am News (29556) 10.00-10.30am News (29556) 10.30-11.00am News (29556) 11.00-11.30am News (29556) 11.30-12.00am News (29556) 12.00-12.30am News (29556) 12.30-1.00am News (29556) 1.00-1.30am News (29556) 1.30-2.00am News (29556) 2.00-2.30am News (29556) 2.30-3.00am News (29556) 3.00-3.30am News (29556) 3.30-4.00am News (29556) 4.00-4.30am News (29556) 4.30-5.00am News (29556) 5.00-5.30am News (29556) 5.30-6.00am News (29556) 6.00-6.30am News (29556) 6.30-7.00am News (29556) 7.00-7.30am News (29556) 7.30-8.00am News (29556) 8.00-8.30am News (29556) 8.30-9.00am News (29556) 9.00-9.30am News (29556) 9.30-10.00am News (29556) 10.00-10.30am News (29556) 10.30-11.00am News (29556) 11.00-11.30am News (29556) 11.30-12.00am News (29556) 12.00-12.30am News (29556) 12.30-1.00am News (29556) 1.00-1.30am News (29556) 1.30-2.00am News (29556) 2.00-2.30am News (29556) 2.30-3.00am News (29556) 3.00-3.30am News (29556) 3.30-4.00am News (29556) 4.00-4.30am News (29556) 4.30-5.00am News (29556) 5.00-5.30am News (29556) 5.30-6.00am News (29556) 6.00-6.30am News (29556) 6.30-7.00am News (29556) 7.00-7.30am News (29556) 7.30-8.00am News (29556) 8.00-8.30am News (29556) 8.30-9.00am News (29556) 9.00-9.30am News (29556) 9.30-10.00am News (29556) 10.00-10.30am News (29556) 10.30-11.00am News (29556) 11.00-11.30am News (29556) 11.30-12.00am News (29556) 12.00-12.30am News (29556) 12.30-1.00am News (29556) 1.00-1.30am News (29556) 1.30-2.00am News (29556) 2.00-2.30am News (29556) 2.30-3.00am News (29556) 3.00-3.30am News (29556) 3.30-4.00am News (29556) 4.00-4.30am News (29556) 4.30-5.00am News (29556) 5.00-5.30am News (29556) 5.30-6.00am News (29556) 6.00-6.30am News (29556) 6.30-7.00am News (29556) 7.00-7.30am News (29556) 7.30-8.00am News (29556) 8.00-8.30am News (29556) 8.30-9.00am News (29556) 9.00-9.30am News (29556) 9.30-10.00am News (29556) 10.00-10.30am News (29556) 10.30-11.00am News (29556) 11.00-11.30am News (29556) 11.30-12.00am News (295



EQUESTRIANISM 44

Showtime lights
up opening day
at Olympia

SPORT

FRIDAY DECEMBER 19 1997

BOXING 46

Hamed's backers
left to wait for
audience reaction

Hollioake confident of tour de force in Champions Trophy final

England wary of Lara's threat

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON
IN SHARJAH

ONE more river to cross, one more match to play, and England can return home for Christmas satisfied with a job well done. They must be considered favourites to beat West Indies in the final of the Champions Trophy today because they have won their three matches to get there. But it would be wise to tread carefully in case the Lara volcano discharges lava across the outfield.

In short order, England have beaten India, West Indies and Pakistan and showed that they can defend a total as well as chase one. The batting is functioning reasonably, the bowling has been disciplined, the fielding excellent and the spirit in the side is worth an extra player. They are ready for this match and will not be too disappointed that West Indies are their opponents.

Adam Hollioake, who will be confirmed as captain for the last leg of the West Indies tour sometime next week, cut a confident figure yesterday. He knows he has good men under his command who can be trusted not to fold under pressure, and knows also that the force is with England, who came here largely unheralded but who have impressed everybody with the thoroughness of their cricket.

Victory today would not prepare the ground for the tour of the West Indies, which starts next month, but it would remind people that England are not the international door-mats on whom every team wipes its feet. Furthermore, if the five men who go on from this tournament to the Caribbean take with them something of the purpose and unity that has been so apparent here, England will go into the Test series feeling ten feet tall. Hollioake thought it was "the duty of the five players who are here to take that positive thinking to the West Indies". He said: "There is no reason why the attitude we have shown here should not be carried on the side." Praising the spirit in the side, he said it had been a doddle to lead.

England will probably field the team that has won the three matches to date, al-



David Lloyd, the England coach, watches Adam Hollioake practise before the match against West Indies today. Photograph: Ian Waldie

though Ashley Giles, the Warwickshire left-arm spinner, might get a game if a second slow bowler is required. West Indies played three spinners against India and they took all the wickets that fell to bowlers. Pakistan fielded four against England, three of them wrist spinners. On these turning pitches, the back-of-the-hand bowler who uses the rough outside the right-handers leg stump presents quite a challenge and West Indies have one in Rawl Lewis.

Because England have been so successful it has not proved possible to give games to Giles, Ben Hollioake or Peter Martin. "After the first match we were in a situation where we wanted to keep the same side and when we won again it

became difficult to chuck the others into the heat of battle," Adam Hollioake said. "There are no games in between to find out if they are in form or out of form, so you're better off sticking with what you know."

The captain is aware that the middle order needs to make more runs. "I've made the mistake of playing as if I would do it in England and I've been caught on the boundary a couple of times," he said. "I realise now that it was a mistake to attack as soon as I came in." Only Stewart, the player of the tournament, has succeeded in taking the bowlers on.

Somehow, England are finding enough runs to win, and there must be a good chance that Hick or Thorpe will explode today. They may have to, because Lara is due a big innings and, in this form of cricket, Hooper is a handy batsman.

How many people will attend the final is hard to gauge. The local support for India and Pakistan is enormous, but there should be a few more expatriate English folk on the ground than have been seen so far. The England team may have noted that when the Indians went home yesterday, their tails between their legs, the selectors promptly dropped six players for the forthcoming one-day matches against Sri Lanka and admonished Mohammad Azharuddin, the previous captain, for not doing his best. Whatever happens today, England have certainly done their best this week. All they have to do now is win.

ENGLAND (probable): A J Hollioake (captain), A D Brown, A J Stewart, M V Fleming, A Hick, G P Thorpe, M A Ebdon, D R Brown, M V Fleming, R D B Carr, D W Hughes.

WEST INDIES (probable): C A Walsh (captain), S C Williams, P A Wallace, B C Lara, S Chandrasekhar, C L Hooper, P V Simmons, D Williams, R N Lewis, F A Rose, M V Dillon.

Optimism of holders is shattered by Australia

NAGPUR (England won toss; Australia beat England by eight wickets)

FROM THRASY PETROPOULOS
IN NAGPUR

THE England women's team suffered a rude awakening in the World Cup yesterday when Australia dismissed them for 95 with a ruthless exhibition of the standard of play that is required if they are to harbour any hopes of retaining their world crown.

Four successive victories by England may have been beneficial for confidence, but it was obvious that they were unprepared for the speed and intensity with which Australia play their cricket.

The dismissal of Charlotte Edwards, whose background in boys' cricket should have

prepared her for genuine pace bowling, set the tone for the England innings. Edwards barely laid bat on ball before she was bowled without scoring, beaten as much for pace as movement off the pitch by Catherine Fitzpatrick.

For a while, Jan Brittin and Barbara Daniels repelled the onslaught, but Brittin was bowled by Mason, and Daniels gave her wicket away, pulling a long hop from Olivia Magno straight to backward square-leg.

That wicket was the start of an extraordinary spell by Magno, the leg spinner, which saw her take four wickets for ten runs in nine overs. Magno started with an attacking field of slip, gully and silly point, but so hypnotised were the players by the combination of flight and control that she was still able to dictate terms.

The dismissal of Clare Connor was indicative of England's batting. When Fitzpatrick was brought back in the 42nd over, Connor stepped away and exposed all three stumps to a straight ball. Melissa Reynard at least showed what could be done by hitting three defiant boundaries late in the innings before being out to mid-off.

Australia then showed the wicket held no demons by reaching their target for the loss of only two wickets, although the England bowlers gave a decent account

of themselves. Karen Smithies, the England captain, said: "We didn't really apply ourselves here. We knew it would be very, very different from the last three games. It needed someone to be watchful and get used to the pace of the ball, which no one really did."

Both teams were already assured of their quarter-final places, but the result means that Australia will play in Lucknow tomorrow and England are in Chandigarh on Sunday. They will face either Sri Lanka or Holland, though it was uncertain who will play whom, because Sri Lanka and Holland finished equal on points in pool B and the organisers have yet to announce the final placings.

Hoddle welcomes Wembley visitors

BY MATT DICKINSON

THE World Cup may be six months away, but Glenn Hoddle can already be satisfied with his preparations. The Football Association confirmed last night that Chile and Saudi Arabia will be two of England's opponents in the build-up to France '98 and for Hoddle, the coach, that already represents a minor victory.

He believes that the two countries will provide a similar challenge to that which his team will face in group G from Colombia and Tunisia respectively. "We are looking to develop a balanced and helpful fixture list between now and the start of the World Cup, and both Chile and Saudi Arabia have qualified for France," Hoddle said.

"Chile are clearly similar in style to Colombia and the same can be said of Saudi Arabia in comparison with Tunisia. We have other fixtures to confirm, notably in March, April and the end of May but, so far, I am pleased with the progress."

Chile will provide England's next opponents, at Wembley on February 11. The South Americans, drawn against Italy, Cameroon and Austria in the finals, are likely to feature Ivan Zamorano, the international forward, and Marcello Salas, the River Plate forward, who now looks destined to join his compatriot in Serie A after Manchester United's decision to withdraw their interest in him.

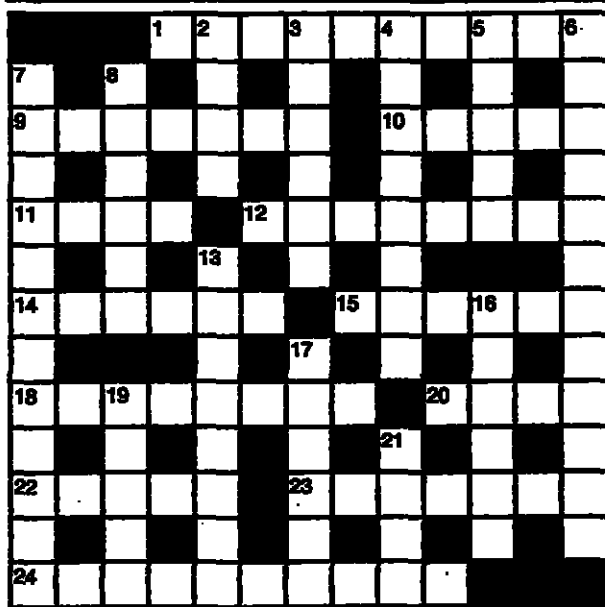
On May 23, Saudi Arabia will provide England's final opponents on home soil before they leave the country to begin their final preparations for the tournament. Saudi Arabia are in the same group as France, South Africa and Denmark.

Hoddle has yet to decide whether England will head straight from London to Morocco for a four-team tournament the following week. However, it seems increasingly likely that England's preparations will conclude with a spell in Spain or Portugal, with the La Manga golf resort in Spain a possible destination.

The Football Association is in discussion with the Portuguese FA about a possible match in Lisbon.

Owen warned, page 44
Pleat summoned, page 44

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1281

ACROSS

- 1 Trifling fault (10)
- 9 Friendly (7)
- 10 Film (5)
- 11 Show resentment (4)
- 12 Unmarried woman (8)
- 14 Constricted (6)
- 15 Flushed; very busy (6)
- 18 Naughty behaviour (8)
- 20 (Cap) peak (glass) be full (4)
- 22 Month to be in England (Browning) (5)
- 23 Tumultuous reception (7)
- 24 One keen to succeed (10)

DOWN

- 2 Napoleon exile island (4)
- 3 Eerie (6)
- 4 Insane (8)
- 5 Tweed greenish mixture (5)
- 6 Obsessed brain (3-5-4)
- 7 Gov't revenue-raising (4,3,5)
- 8 Supporting column (6)
- 13 Caver (8)
- 16 Sluggish, dormant (6)
- 17 Rebellion (6)
- 19 Belt for fastening (5)
- 21 Succeed in (exam); free-entry ticket (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1280

ACROSS: 1 Pop-up 7 Artisan 8 Valiant 9 Spinach 11 Detour 13 Pizzicato 15 Crocodile 19 Engels 21 Mattins 23 Hurdler 24 Molatto 25 Pep up

DOWN: 1 Paved 2 Palace 3 Play up 4 Pats 5 Picnic 6 Paucity 10 Puzzle 12 Ridden 14 Break up 16 Catnap 17 Entrap 18 Dewlap 20 Scrap 22 Shop

THE TIMES BOOKSHOP

NEW TIMES CROSSWORD TITLES NOW AVAILABLE!
The Times Two Crosswords (Book 7 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 20 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 31 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 42 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 53 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 64 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 75 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 86 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 97 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 108 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 119 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 130 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 141 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 152 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 163 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 174 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 185 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 196 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 207 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 218 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 229 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 240 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 251 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 262 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 273 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 284 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 295 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 306 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 317 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 328 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 339 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 350 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 361 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 372 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 383 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 394 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 405 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 416 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 427 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 438 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 449 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 460 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 471 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 482 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 493 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 504 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 515 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 526 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 537 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 548 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 559 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 570 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 581 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 592 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 603 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 614 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 625 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 636 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 647 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 658 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 669 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 680 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 691 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 702 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 713 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 724 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 735 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 746 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 757 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 768 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 779 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 790 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 801 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 812 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 823 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 834 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 845 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 856 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 867 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 878 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 889 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 900 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 911 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 922 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 933 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 944 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 955 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 966 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 977 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 988 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 999 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1010 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1021 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1032 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1043 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1054 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1065 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1076 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1087 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1098 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1109 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1120 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1131 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1142 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1153 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1164 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1175 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1186 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1197 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1208 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1219 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1230 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1241 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1252 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1263 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1274 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1285 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1296 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1307 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1318 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1329 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1340 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1351 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1362 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1373 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1384 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1395 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1406 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1417 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1428 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1439 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1450 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1461 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1472 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1483 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1494 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1505 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1516 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1527 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1538 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1549 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1560 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1571 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1582 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1593 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1604 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1615 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1626 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1637 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1648 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1659 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1670 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1681 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1692 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1703 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1714 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1725 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1736 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1747 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1758 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1769 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1780 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1791 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1802 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1813 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1824 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1835 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1846 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1857 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1868 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1879 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1890 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1901 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1912 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1923 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1934 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1945 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1956 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1967 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1978 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 1989 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2000 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2011 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2022 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2033 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2044 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2055 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2066 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2077 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2088 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2099 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2110 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2121 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2132 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2143 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2154 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2165 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2176 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2187 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2198 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2209 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2220 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2231 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2242 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2253 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2264 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2275 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2286 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2297 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2308 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2319 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2330 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2341 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2352 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2363 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2374 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2385 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2396 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2407 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2418 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2429 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2440 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2451 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2462 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2473 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2484 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2495 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2506 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2517 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2528 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2539 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2550 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2561 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2572 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2583 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2594 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2605 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2616 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2627 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2638 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2649 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2660 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2671 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2682 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2693 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2704 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2715 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2726 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2737 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2748 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2759 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2770 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2781 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2792 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2803 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2814 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2825 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2836 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2847 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2858 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2869 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2880 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2891 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2902 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2913 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2924 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2935 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2946 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2957 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2968 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2979 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 2990 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3001 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3012 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3023 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3034 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3045 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3056 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3067 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3078 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3089 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3100 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3111 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3122 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3133 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3144 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3155 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3166 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3177 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3188 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3199 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3210 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3221 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3232 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3243 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3254 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3265 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3276 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3287 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3298 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3309 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3320 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3331 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3342 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3353 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3364 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3375 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3386 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3397 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3408 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3419 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3430 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3441 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3452 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3463 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3474 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3485 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3496 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3507 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3518 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3529 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3540 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3551 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3562 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3573 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3584 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3595 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3606 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3617 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3628 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3639 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3650 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3661 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3672 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3683 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3694 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3705 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3716 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3727 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3738 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3749 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3760 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3771 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3782 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3793 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3804 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3815 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3826 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3837 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3848 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3859 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3870 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3881 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3892 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3903 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3914 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3925 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3936 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3947 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3958 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3969 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3980 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 3991 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4002 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4013 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4024 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4035 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4046 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4057 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4068 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4079 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4090 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4101 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4112 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4123 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4134 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4145 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4156 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4167 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4178 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4189 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4200 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4211 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4222 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4233 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4244 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4255 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4266 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4277 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4288 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4299 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4310 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4321 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4332 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4343 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4354 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4365 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4376 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4387 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4398 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4409 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4420 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4431 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4442 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4453 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4464 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4475 - £2.99). The Times Two Crosswords (Book 4